

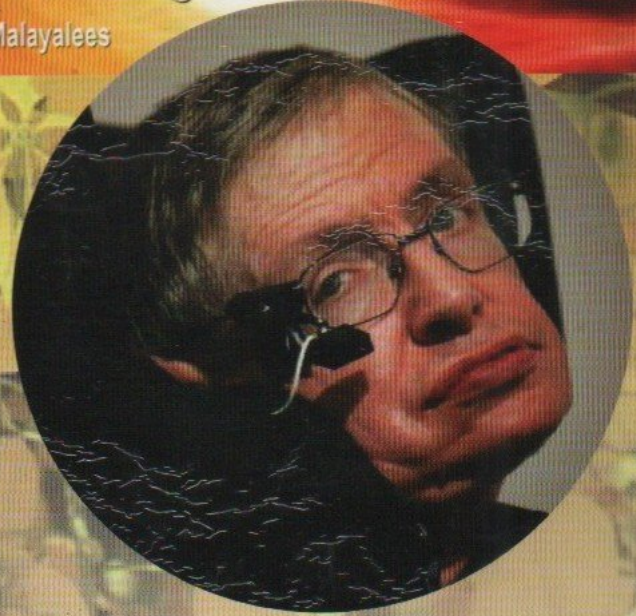
Vishu - Easter Greetings

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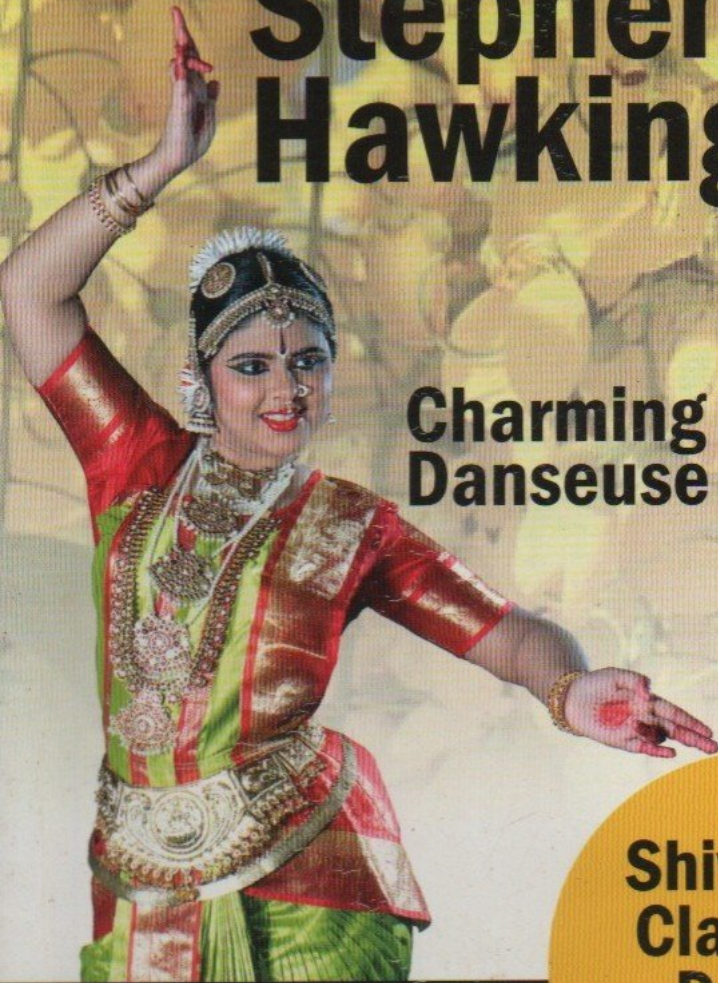
Kerala in Mumbai

The Only English / Malayalam Monthly Magazine linking Mumbai Malayalees

Remembering Stephen Hawking



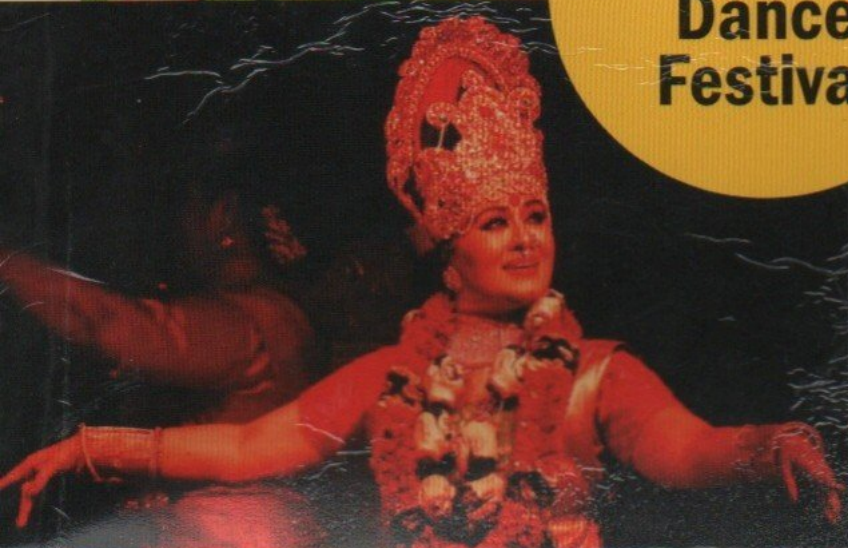
Charming Danseuse



The Uncommonly Common Man



Shivanjali Classical Dance Festival



Kairali Cultural Association - Silver Jubilee

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Sreedharan opts out

When Pamban-Dhanushkodi Passenger was crossing the Bridge on December 23, 1964, tidal waves shattered the bridge and all passengers, numbering about 200, were killed. 125 out of 146 girders of the 2345 metre long, 50 year old bridge were washed away. Sreedharan, just 32 then, enjoying a holiday at his ancestral home was summoned to Madras and he was entrusted the work of reconstructing the bridge, with the condition that the work should be completed in six months. When he was returning, he was called by General Manager B C Ganguly who asked him to complete the work in three months. Sreedharan finished the job in less than two months at negligible costs and endeared himself to Indian Railways.

Later he was entrusted with many other projects and everywhere he worked with 100% commitment, avoiding all obstacles and completed them with minimum delay and shorter funds and earned kudos. He worked everywhere: Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Konkan region, Cochin shipyard and earned many laurels.

When Kerala wanted a metro project in Kochi, he was available. Then the state wanted a Thalasseri-Mysore railwayline and Sreedharan, working for DMRC, prepared a viability report that stated a clear No-No. It was clear that this issue kept away the government who, come what may, wanted to implement to score brownie points, from DMRC and Sreedharan.

The light metro project for Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram was assigned to DMRC for preparing project report and Sreedharan on behalf of DMRC, submitted it four years ago. The project was to cover 35.12 km in two cities at a cost of Rs 7,446 crore of which only Rs 2,700 crore was the share of the state. Normal practice in such cases was to approve the project and the state advance the funds to commence the work as the central government takes about two years to sanction the funds. In Kerala the state government neither approved the DPR nor signed the agreement, submitted 16 months ago, with DMRC as project consultant. Despite meeting the CM Pinarayi Vijayan and PWD minister Sudhakaran several times, the government remained aloof. Since it was running two offices in Kerala and incurring about 16 lakh every month on this count, it decided to shut the shop as there was no positive sign from the CM, minister and concerned bureaucrats. CM did not even give him an appointment despite repeated request. It was the last nail on the coffin. Finally a dejected Sreedharan sent a letter to the secretary of the department informing about the withdrawal from the project. The DMRC offices in Kerala are on the verge of closing down forever.

The much touted progressive government of LDF is now set a good example how to reject an efficient, experienced and non-corrupt official without telling him to get out. Listen to him first, then ignore his views and finally refuse to meet him and when cornered by journalists, tell them that the man concerned is too old to do any work (Sreedharan is 85, much younger to V S Achuthanandan who is decorating the chair of specially created Chairman of the Administrative Reforms Commission.)

A clear sign is now sent out: There is no value for efficiency, efficacy, expediency, honesty, commitment and love for one's state. What is demanded is total submission to the people in power irrespective of the impact on the affairs of the state, help people in authority to make money on the side and play second fiddle. Progress need not be positive. Kerala and India are not in America or Europe where the ability to work is the criterion to continue in service. Quality and quantity of work are the qualifications to continue in service and not the age and submission to the authority.

Our young men would now draw their lessons about the new qualifications needed to keep a money making job and soon these qualifications could creep into the syllabus of Management text books.



Guruvayur Kesavan

Greetings from a septuagenarian in Guruvayur! I am 77. I am thrilled to see a copy of KIM magazine and contents, beautifully printed and edited. KIM deserves a special place in the hearts of Malayalees all over.

I wish to suggest that you arrange to publish an article with photograph about Gajaraja Guruvayur Kesavan, an elephant par excellence, a true devotee of Sri Guruvayurappan, gifted by Nilambur Valiyaraja, Manavedan Thirumulpad. Kesavan passed away on Guruvayur Ekadasi Day on 02-02-1976. There is a beautiful statue of the majestic Kesavan in Sri Valsam Guest House Compound. Please do the needful. Best wishes for your continued success.

M Chidambaram
Guruvayur

*(KIM published a short article on
Guruvayur Kesavan when it covered
Guruvayur Temple - Ed.)*

Winks of Priya Prakash Varrier

Winking is a form of facial expression in which one eye is closed and the other is left open for a short time. Not everyone can wink and more often than not, person can only wink one eye comfortably. Typically, a wink is a gesture to let you in on something, like some one's intention or understanding. If someone is teasing or simply flirting with someone, even if it is you, the wink lets you know that is indeed teasing or simple flirting that is going on without tipping others off. Eye wink is used between brothers and sisters as a code language to deny something from the back of the face to their friends or even close relatives. A person can show an eye wink action to

deny payment of a loan to a third person, but a layman take it otherwise and handover the cover having the amount in a fine gesture thinking that it is to be paid and denied as the eye wink denotes.

Valentine's Day opened up the Pandora's Box to know the real meaning of an eye wink between lovers. If he starts holding your gaze and making frequent eye contact, this can mean that the winker has romantic intentions. Despite its common interpretation, a wink can also be a sign of trust. A friend winks at you to keep a secret, which means that he trusts you to keep it confidential. A wink can be flirty, friendly or an acknowledgment of an inside joke between two people. However, in the virtual work, a wink typically conveys interest. If someone winks at you on a dating website, he's letting you know that he likes your profile -- or maybe just the photos you posted.

South Indian cine actor Dhanush's Kolaveri Kolaveri di was one of the first viral sensation with many likes and people were repeatedly seeing the video and went to extent of mugging up the lyrics to sing in other languages also. Now Priya Prakash Varrier has become a sensation in 2018 on the eve of Valentine's Day. Thus she stacks up against other overnight Internet successes.

Similar to a wink in real life, the winky face is more than just a simple smile- It can mean that what you have just said is a complete lie or even that you would like to do something a little bit more than just deliver a letter into some one's letter box. For me, it mostly refers to the age old and rather cheesy. In all, a wink is a facial expression

made by briefly closing one eye. A wink is an informal mode of non-verbal communication usually signalling shared hidden knowledge or intent. The dancing talent can help you to come out with a natural eye wink as the dances like Bharatha Natyam, Kuchupudi and other dances stress the importance of an eye contact in the best way possible. For some it is a face that launches thousands of fans, but for Malayalam actress hopeful Priya Prakash Varrier it was her wink, her dramatic eyebrows and her cheeky flirtatious mannerisms that catapulted her into an overnight Internet sensation. The Malayalam song made a sensation like Dhanush's Kolaveri Kolaveri di and became an overnight success.

Priya Prakash Varrier's social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook have also received an instant blue tick mark, which in today's times indicate that she has truly arrived on the social scene. It is safe to say that she has transformed winking into a desirable flirting tool and an art form.

Even this news has become a political issue, with one person who likes all things about the movie has filed a petition since he believes the song is a form of an insult. What can we say about all these developments? Where is India going? I am sure like me many are pained. One thing is sure. Winking is sort of an invitation for the obvious. Not to be appreciated or encouraged. Why then this Kolaveri di about Priya's eye winking.

Jayanthi Subramaniam
Sanpada Navi Mumbai

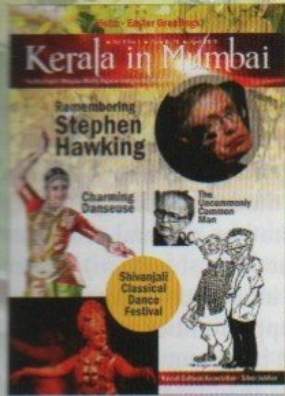
Continued on page 61

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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ശോപാലകൃഷ്ണൻ നടുവത്തേരി





Kairali Cultural Association



Unity is strength is a time tested proverb and in every language it conveys the same meaning. Unity

is achieved when one or a group of people takes initiative to bring all likeminded people together so that they could achieve what they could not do single handed.

Brindavan Society started taking shape in Thane during early 1983 and by early 1990s, around 100 buildings sprung up there and it was truly a cosmopolitan set up. Not much later, further buildings started rising around Brindavan Society. Wherever Malayalees go, they soon get together and form some core groups and discussions followed to give a concrete shape to their aspirations and welfare measures along with promotion of cultural leanings. Kairali Cultural Association is the fruit of such deliberations.

What is moral boosting is that the Malayalees around did not think of themselves as members of certain community but a part of the secular social fabric. Caste and region had no place in their broad thinking but they were part of Malayalam speaking community. The word Kairali in the name of the group is not accidental but is the result of collective determination of staying together under any circumstances. Kairali Cultural Association came into being in 1993.

Silver Jubilee is an important milestone not only in one's own life, partnership or organisation but embracing it with full warmth and nostalgia is another matter. Kairali Cultural Association is now in its Silver Jubilee and it has made it a festival not only to its members but to the entire locality, involving all of them in its varied activities so that the entire society benefit out of it.

KIM News Bureau

included as Special Invitees.

Objectives

KCA is very clear about its aims and objectives. It declares (i) to bring together the people of Brindavan Society (Thane) and surrounding areas to build a common platform for their welfare and progress and to attend to social and cultural needs facing them; (ii) to create awareness particularly among the upcoming generation about our ancient culture and modern teachings through science, literature, cultural programmes and health activities; and (iii) to locate new talents in various spheres, provide them with opportunities to develop their abilities and bring out the best in them by providing reading materials, conducting lectures, demonstrations, competitions and other theoretical and/or practical means for their own benefits and for the benefits of the society at large.

Activities

KCA intend to achieve their objectives through various activities as enumerated below:

- (i) Medical Free checkups and counselling camps by bringing in eminent specialists in the field of healthcare;
- (ii) Holding Charity events and donating the proceeds thereof to charity such as donation, resource mobilisation and voluntary support. KCA participated



Members of Managing Committee

in providing solace to Latur earth quake victims, drought affected farmers of Aurangabad, and financial support to medically ill and disabled;

(iii) **Promotion of Academic Excellence:** Recognizes and promotes academic excellence among the children of its members through a series of endowment awards and prizes. KCA has been pioneer in establishing an award to the top ranker of 10 th Standard Marathi medium of Sreerang Vidyalaya, Sreerang Society, Thane;

(iv) **Cultural programmes:** It helps children of members to get opportunities to nurture their latent talents and give exposure in fine arts and literary activities;

(v) **Malayalam Classes:** As part of Government of Kerala's Malayalam Mission, conducts Malayalam classes once in a week for imparting learning opportunities to the children of Keralites staying in and around Brindavan Society.

(vi) **Cosmo Winter Fair:** It is an annual event in which all residents of Brindavan and surrounding areas can take part in sports, drawing, fancy dress, music, dance etc without charging them anything. It creates a festive look during three weekends and to enable winners to receive attractive prizes. It is also open to elders and couples so that they can relive their younger days by participating in various games and sports.

Silver Jubilee Action Plan

As part of their Silver Jubilee Celebrations, they have successfully conducted the following activities:-

Medical camps;

Rapid Chess Competition for different age groups under the supervision of Thane;

District Chess Association;

Cultural Procession as "Kerala Piravi Day" with the blend of Kerala's own traditional fine Arts, Folk Arts such as Kaikottikali, Oppana, Margam kali, Mohiniattam with symbolic representation of different communities of Kerala.

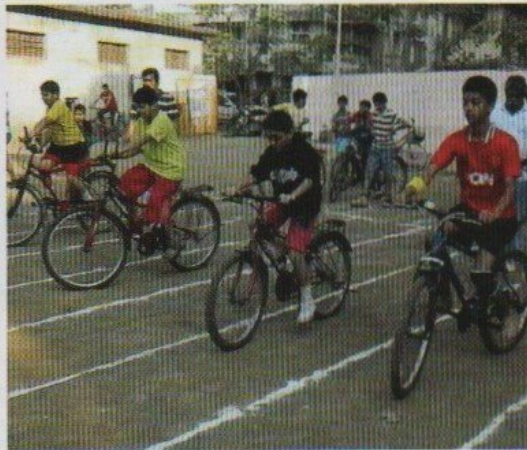
Legal Seminar on Property; Family matters and Labour law.

Programmes in the anvil:

Medical Check Up Dental; Ayurveda; Food Festival;

Debate: Discussions on contemporary issues; and Career development programmes.

Now all eyes are focussed on Grand Finale on Sunday, 22nd April 2018 at Kashinath Ghanekar Auditorium, Thane. ■



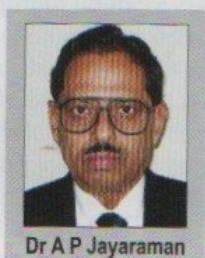
Action Galore



During Dental check up camp

REMEMBERING STEPHEN HAWKING

We find the concept of God appearing like a recurring refrain in the book. He was asking and attempting to answer the quintessential Einsteinian question by understanding the mind of God.



Dr A P Jayaraman

■ Stephen Hawking was an amazing scientist and an awesome science story creator. It was an indelibly magnificent event in a majestic evening near Gateway of

India where on the western horizon the Sun lingered for a beloved guest. On 12 January 2001, Professor Stephen Hawking turned 59. He was in Mumbai and the British Council had organized a celebratory reception in his honour at Hotel Taj. My scicom colleague Suhas Naik Satam had carefully planned our strategic presence at the reception where the who's who of Indian science and media had gathered. Hawking wheeled himself in his motorized chair equipped with the most sophisticated communication equipment and voice synthesizer with his head contorted slightly to one side and hands crossed over to work the controls followed by a team including a nurse. It was an incredibly out of this world exotic experience. His robotic metallic voice in American accent spiced with British humor reverberated around and through the hall. My mind boggled: How could he manipulate Einsteinian equations in his mind when he could no longer hold a pen or a paper in his deformed hands! A celebrity media person asked me if I would share with her with a one liner that would succinctly describe the great work of Hawking. Clumsily scratching my head as if to actuate retrievable memory like a school boy and in tongue in cheek style I blurted out. "He derived the quantum gravity integral for the total universe." Both of us smiled enigmatically and the byte did see the light of the next morning.



Stephen Hawking

Arrow of Time

The most luminous star in the firmament of modern cosmology who was tantalizing us with a promissory clue to the glue of the Universe and a Theory of Everything has become part and parcel of the immortality of the past by the arrow of time and the play of entropy abetted by the tragedy of a neurodegenerative disorder. His three children, Lucy, Robert and Tim reported to the world on March 15 "We are deeply saddened that our beloved father passed away today. He was a great scientist and an extraordinary man whose work and legacy will live on for many years." There was a continuous flow of condolences and obituaries from across the world punctuated with meeting, reading, learning, working with and remembering him.

Vedic Intuition

Science which originated by

divergence from natural philosophy once again saw its consilient convergence to its origin in his monumental work. In his inimitable scientific style he asked sublime questions that wander through eternity and some of his seminal questions were metaphysical and finds striking resonance to the glorious intellectual traditions of ancient Indian sages. His genre-defining book, *A Brief History of Time*, has sold more than 10 million copies since its publication thirty years ago. We find the concept of God appearing like a recurring refrain in the book. He was asking and attempting to answer the quintessential Einsteinian question by understanding the mind of God. He sketched a large picture of the Universe with neither a beginning nor an end in time, nor even an edge in space. Swami Ranganathananda had made illuminating explorations into the semantic space of Indian cosmology as expounded in Nasadiya Suktha where

the significance of the concept Bindu finds an irresistible collocation with the paradigm of singularity propounded by Hawking. By building a bridge between singularities of Big Bang and Penrose, Hawking looked at the black hole to understand the Universe. He argued for a point (Bindu?) where space and time dissolve into a singularity and added that if the arrow of time were reversed, it would be valid for the Universe.

M.D or Ph.D

Stephen William Hawking was born in Oxford, England on January 8, 1942. With justifiable pride, he used to state that his date of birth was noteworthy as it was the 300th death anniversary of Galileo Galeili. Hawking died at home peacefully in Cambridge on March 14, 2018. That was on the birth anniversary of Albert Einstein with whom he is often equated. Stephen was the first of four children of Oxford University graduates, Isobel and Frank Hawking. He grew up in an indulgently intellectual family that read books at their dinner table eccentrically immersed in academics!

Frank Hawking was a reputed medical researcher and he wanted his



Stephen Hawking with daughter Lucy

son to follow his profession prosecuting a career in medicine, but biology and medicine did not measure up to the exacting standards of rigour set by Stephen in his mind. To be Dr. Stephen Hawking M.D or Not to Be! Thus he turned to the study of mathematics and physics which brought him to the frontline of thought leaders. Stephen Hawking belonged to that eclectic class of beautiful minds of physics having

written the most beautiful paper in the history of physics. He won the Albert Einstein Award, the Wolf Prize, the Copley Medal, and the Fundamental Physics Prize. Hawking was not awarded the Nobel prize for want of experimental evidence for his theories. A little over a year ago, Jeff Steinhauer announced that he had found evidence of Hawking radiation in a laboratory analogue made of extremely cold atoms but this evidence was not definitive.

Early College Career

Hawking did not display the blinding brilliancy of his intellect in the early college days. He had smartly estimated that he had put in 1,000 hours of study during his three year undergraduate program at Oxford. That works out to just under 2 hours per college day! At the end of the course, he was perilously close to the borderline between a first and second class degree. Convinced that he was seen as a difficult student, he told his viva examiners that if they gave him a first he would move to Cambridge to pursue his PhD. If second class is given he threatened to stay. Examiners awarded him an A and he moved to where he wanted to be. His research career started with despondency. He desired to have Fred Hoyle, the most famous astronomer as his guide but his complement of research students was full. Hawkins had to work with a less known physicist Dennis Sciama who turned out to be very supportive and encouraged him to work out the maths to prove that the universe began in a singularity.

Dismal Prognosis

His fragile frame in which was housed an agile brain was an eerie spectacle of tragic triumph of mind over matter, of physiology over neurology. His is a rare text book case of pathology. He was diagnosed with a neurodegenerative disease called Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) when he just crossed his teens. It involved the neurons responsible for controlling voluntary muscle movement which produces movements like chewing, walking, and talking. Two

PUSHPAM SILKS
WEDDING SAREES

D. S. CUTPIECE & R. M. SHOPPING
HANDLOOM TEXTILES

SILK, COTTON, POLYSTER, KERALA SAREES, SET MUNDU,
SKIRT WITH BLOWSE, CHURIDAR, POOJA CLOTHES AVAILABLE

RAMRAJ DHOTI, MUNDUKAL, READYMADE SHIRTS,
VELCRO DHOTI WITH POCKETS AVAILABLE

കാമരാജ് ദോത്തി, മുണ്ടുകൾ, റെഡിമെയ്ഡ് ഷർട്ടുകൾ
"രാട്ടിച്ചോ കെട്ടിക്കോ വെൽക്രോ ദോത്തി പോക്കറ്റ് ഉൾപ്പെടെ"
ഫാക്ടറി വിലയിൽ ലഭിക്കുന്നതാണ്

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years into the diagnosis he courted his sweetheart and married her. The disease was progressive, meaning the symptoms got worse over time. Currently, there is no cure for ALS and no effective treatment to halt, or reverse, the progression of the disease. Only half of the patients afflicted with ALS survive three or more years after diagnosis. Just 20 percent reach more than five years, and a mere 10 percent make it beyond 10 years. In a rarest of rare case, Hawking made it for full five decades! They were poignant decades. Muscles lost their tone. In 1985 he lost his ability to speak. Speechless and immobilized but he thrilled the world of science as a scientist and the people at large as a public intellectual in his signature style. With death in line of sight and he refusing to recognize its presence in such proximity, he plunged into scientific activity. A sure case of postmodernist absurdity! He spoke also of death, an eventuality that sat on a more distant horizon than doctors thought. "I'm not afraid of death, but I'm in no hurry to die," he said.

Black Holes

In the annals of science, Hawking is the father of black hole. A black hole may be thought of as vitamin tablet that fizzles out in water. He began investigation when it was a mathematical babe in arms in Einstein's general theory of relativity. Strange are the ways of black holes. They are super hyper dense stuff challenging our imagination, a stress ball made up of matter. They have such incredibly strong gravity that absolutely nothing escapes from them. If you can make an imaginary travel to core of a black hole there is a strange singularity. Matter is condensed to such concentration into such a small space where gravity is infinite. Tearing the fabric of physics as the metaphor of Guardian paper goes. The circumference of the stress ball is the event horizon. He shocked the physics world when he calculated that this surface should slowly emit radiation

which is known as Hawking radiation. Black holes were not truly black. This emission, he reasoned, should ultimately lead the black hole to shrink and disappear. Hawking radiation should erase information from the Universe, in apparent contradiction to some of the basic tenets of quantum theory. Nature abhors vacuum. Quantum mechanics states that vacuum is not empty. It is teeming with an eerie concoction of particles and antiparticles with dizzy dynamics. At the edge of the black hole they part with the negative mass particles falling into the black hole. They become smaller and smaller and ultimately explode brighter than

ultimate dream of a theoretical physicist. His equation for the entropy of a black hole has the great universal constants blended into it.

Gravity Guru in Antigravity

In 2007, Hawking who has been redefining gravity and was dissecting its paradigms accepted an offer from Zero G Corporation to experience weightlessness. The company uses a plane that climbs and then dives in such a way that for 25 seconds at a time, everyone inside the plane is weightless. He magnificently floated in zero gravity a feat the fittest of the fit would shy away from. Poetic justice to a scientist who did thought experiments with gravity floating freely and cheerfully from the constraints the very gravity. Santhosh George Kulangara of Sancharam fame once gave me a detailed description of the antigravity training he received and I used to wonder how Hawking withstood such hostile unearthly space!

Science Storytelling

Hawking and his daughter Lucy created books for children with the stories of George and Annie encountering everything from blue moons to the black holes. *George's Secret Key to the Universe* is the first book in the series. Lucy said "I grew up with storytelling as a family tradition on one side and science on the other side." "My father is an amazing science

communicator he has an extraordinary ability to speak in very simple terms about complex things". "Not everything can be simplified, but we've tried to use the power of storytelling so that you have an experience," said Hawking. Together, the father and daughter team have tackled storytelling around everything from robotics to the big bang, climate change to astronomy and created classic science literature for children. ■

(President, Academy for the Advancement of STEAM Stories
www.drapjayaraman.com)



Stephen Hawking with Dr Jayaraman and Alyque Padamsee

thousands of suns. He was the first to show that radiation escapes from black holes.

Unsurprisingly Hawking expressed his desire to have the equation of this radiation be engraved on his tombstone. It is a magnificent confluence of the gravity of Isaac Newton, the quantum constant of Max Planck, thermodynamics of Ludwig Boltzmann and relativistic light velocity of Albert Einstein

Will one size fit all? Hawking was heroically pursuing a Theory of Everything which will explain all the phenomena of the Universe, the

Maharashtra Budget 2018-19

A CATALYST FOR DEVELOPMENT



V. Balachandran

■ Mumbai, Saturday, the 10th of March, 2018. We woke up this day to read three important news-items in the papers. They were: (1) The U. S.

President Donald Trump's acceptance of the invitation from the Hitler like President Kirn Jong-un of North Korea for talks. (2) The Supreme Court judgment in favour of passive euthanasia. (3) The Maharashtra State Budget for 2018-19 with no new taxes. The first is of world-wide interest; the second is of nation-wide interest; the third is of State-wide interest. As the last impacts us all immediately, let us have a look at it.

The Finance Minister, Sudhir Mungantiwar, has presented a deficit budget. In the heyday of micro-economics and laissez-faire a budget deficit was looked upon with horror as it portended inflation. The view changed in the thirties of the last century when Lord J M Keynes (1883-1946) persuaded governments to undertake public works programmes to increase employment. In India, after Independence, state-planning within a socialist economic framework, encouraged government spending on a large scale; deficit budgets became the order of the day both at the Centre and in the States. Mungantiwar's budget for 2018-'19 anticipates a total fiscal deficit of Rs. 50,585 crore (The total outlay is Rs. 3.38 lakh crore as against an income of Rs. 2.88 lakh crore).

There is nothing alarming about this scale of deficit. It falls within the permissible limit when the deficit is related to the State Income (Gross Domestic Product or GDP) in percentage terms this is about 1.8%. But the State intends borrowing to finance some of the capital projects. The State's debt is estimated to go up to Rs. 4.61 lakh crore by March, 2019. This would mean an annual debt servicing to the tune of Rs. 34,385

crore. If this is taken into account, the revenue deficit alone would go up to about Rs. 50,000 crore (now estimated at Rs. 15,374 crore).

This amount, taken along with the payments to be made to the staff and pensioners as per the recommendations of the Seventh Pay Commission, would push up the price-level. Only a favourable monsoon and an increase in food production would serve as a mitigating factor.

The Background

The present budget has been drawn up against a background of a severe

increased). In the case of horticulture the area as well as production slightly declined. Marathwada as well as Vidarbha suffered the most owing to a long dry spell of 45 days.

Inevitably, the small and marginal farmers (who form 78% of the total of 136 lakh farmers) have suffered the most and their misery is reflected in the large number of reported suicides and mass agitations, the latter mostly engineered by Opposition parties. However, the picture of agricultural distress its spread and incidence-is not clear. The hierarchical government machinery at the district level, from the



Minister of Finance Mungantiwar with his DM

drought and a decline in agricultural production; the economic growth-rate has dropped to 7.3% in 2017-18 as against the 10% in the previous year.

Taking the kharif (June to October/November) and Rabi (Winter) seasons together the output (as estimated) of cereals, pulses, oilseeds and cotton has fallen by 6%, 39%, 4% and 73% respectively. Food grain production was 51.17 lakh tonnes in 2017 as against 72.76 lakh tonnes in the previous year (The area under and production of sugarcane, however,

collectorate to the panchayat, seems to have failed to take timely preventive action in regard to farmer suicides. The functionaries concerned should have collected adequate information about the defaulters in farm loan repayments. The Government was also reluctant to declare a general loan waiver as opinion on this way of relieving the distress of the farmers was divided among the experts; even the Reserve Bank of India was against it. Yet, the Government was forced to declare a waiver under intense political pressure. By the end of

December, 2017, Rs. 10,913.28 crore had been credited to the loan accounts of 27,13,055 farmers. The process is bound to be slow and there is no guarantee that there will be an end to this problem.

Agriculture and Monsoon

Agriculture in Maharashtra, as in most other parts of the country, is dependent on the monsoon which often plays truant. Failure of rainfall and the consequent drought and distress are nothing new to Maharashtra. It experienced severe drought during the years 1970, 71, 72 and 73. The battle had to be fought on two fronts viz. famine and severe unemployment. Massive relief works were undertaken. The experience of operating these relief works led to the Employment Guarantee Scheme suggested by V S Page, who was the Chairman of the Legislative Council for a long time. The EGS Act came into force in 1977. This is the seed of the present central Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) now in force since 2006.

The present Budget provides for the relief of the drought-stricken farmers in a number of ways besides the loan-waiver. One of them is to encourage group-farming. A group of 20 farmers with a total holding of 100 acres would be given up to Rs. 1 crore for group-farming as subsidy. This scheme, it would appear, steers clear of the defects of the Soviet-type collectives and the Indian-type co-operatives. This is a welcome measure and, based on experience, needs to be expanded to cover all the 43,937 villages of Maharashtra. The farmers' resort to private moneylenders, which is reported to be increasing, should be curbed. On March 31, 2017, there were 10,95,701 loanees with borrowings amounting to Rs. 1614.97 crore.

Budget Priorities

The State Budget rightly assigns priority to social and community services (Rs. 35,373 crore) followed by agriculture and allied services (Rs. 18,112 crore). Transport is another sector which gets adequate attention (Rs. 12,857 crore). Maharashtra has a strong industrial base with engineering, chemical, and miscellaneous industries. This sector has suffered a setback owing to fall in demand that may be attributed to the decline in agricultural production. There are, however, good signs of revival. At the global investors' summit held in February, 2018, 4108 proposals with an investment of Rs. 12.07 lakh crore, generating an employment of 36.77 lakh, were settled. Even if 50% of the proposals are carried out, it would be an achievement. Provisions are made for development in the fields of education and health.

Maharashtra has a per capita income of Rs. 1,65,491, which is more than the national average. The ease of doing business is, perhaps, the most favourable in the State. Tax collections have surged under the GST regime. There is absolutely no basis for taking a pessimistic view of future development. Even if the light appears to be dim, as in the eyes of some Opposition members, all that is needed is to trim the wick. And, of course, the Rain God, Varuna, should shower his blessings. ■

Poem



Anisha Nair

Being a Woman...

In my dreams one day I felt god asking me
given a chance to live again what would you be?
Thinking deep within I felt nothing is better for me
I still feel I want to be me

Looking at me he smiled again
and asked me why?
I am happy with my life as I am wise
Is it not a reason to suffice?
God still smiling at his best
said the reason not best for his curiosity to rest
I said to him that I was strong
and could never be wrong
When it comes to giving birth to a life
teaching the little one how to strive
It is my patience that people admire
I can surpass any challenge while walking on the fire
I bring love to a man's world
loving him like a child in my arms I hold
Teaching him the value of sharing
and making him realize what is caring
I am like a flower, ready to shower
Beauty and sweet fragrance all over
Pain is my best friend
which I hold within me and never do lend

You may say crying is my weapon and art
But I smile at this, as letting them cleanses my heart
I need no space with a man to prove
as I know there are mountains I too can move
My unassailable will makes me stand apart
as I can rule this world with my heart
I need no quotes to show my strength in pages
as I have already proven that for many ages
God! If I get another chance to live and gain
I choose for a thousand births as a woman again.

MADHAVIKUTTY STORIES

The recent release of the biopic Aami based on the life of Nalappat Kamala, aka, Kamala Das or Madhavikutty, has motivated many a young reader among Malayalis to peep into the stories written by Madhavikutty, the pen name of Kamala Das. There was no other authoress whose auto-biography 'Ente Katha' (My Story in English) aroused a storm in the Indian literary scene as she had. Noted Malayalam literary critic Prof M R Chandrasekharan delves into the short stories of Madhavikutty.



Prof M R Chandrasekharan

■ Anton Chekhov was above all a writer of short stories. As a short story writer his place in the world of literature is second to none. One of the compulsive things in his writing was

deleting the first and last portion of the story. He showed no mercy to do so especially in his own writing. Based on this habit of his, his close friends are said to have spread a rumour that soon after he writes his last line, someone should snatch the papers from his hands and run away. If left to himself, he would continuously cut off the beginning and end of the story until it becomes 'they loved when they were young, got married and lived thereafter utterly unhappy.' When Chekhov heard this story, he was said to have responded, "That's true!"

The modifications brought in by Chekhov in short stories are detailed by Somerset Maugham in his 'Points of View.' Earlier the mode of narration was simple. Those days, short stories had four elements in narration: (A) Background, (B) Characterisation, (C) Actions and experiences of characters and (D) Culmination. Story telling is an elaborate exercise. The story could be of any length. However when the periodicals started publishing short stories, the length was curtailed. The author was compelled to remove anything that was non-essential. The first casualty was the background as it was meant only to prepare the reader to accept the background of the story. The readers were unmindful when they were directly introduced to the main characters. Then it was the turn of the last element i.e., the culmination. Reader is interested to know what happened to the main character. That



Kamala Das Aka Madhavikutty

can be achieved by symbolism. A clear indication would satisfy the reader. He would be happy if the author could give some opportunity to allow him to fly into the sky of imagination.

When Chekhov was in the business of writing, periodicals were remunerating them in proportion to the number of lines. Still he was not hesitating to surgically remove the beginning and end from his stories. When he became more famous he was encouraged to write longer stories and he obliged. Yet he did not venture to reintroduce the background and culmination in his stories.

His 'Lady with the Dog' is a typical example of Chekhov's narrative style. The content is the short relationship

between a lady who came to Yalta for a short vacation and another gentleman who was also on a vacation there. The lady Anna was already married; so the man Gurov. The story starts thus:

"IT was said that a new person had appeared on the sea-front: a lady with a little dog. Dmitri Dmitritch Gurov, who had by then been a fortnight at Yalta, and so was fairly at home there, had begun to take an interest in new arrivals..."

Both the characters were introduced. Gurov and Anna met. A casual exchange of words; just four-five words! Some amorous flirtations and then they became one. After a few days she received a letter from her husband. The young lady returned to her town. Gurov was bored with Yalta and so he returned

to Moscow. Anyway he considered his secret meetings with Anna as a casual one. He became restless when he reached Moscow and badly wanted to meet her soon. So he went to the S-Town. Later she started visiting Moscow frequently.

The story ends when both of them start thinking how to end this secret sojourn. The last paragraph ends like this:

“And it seemed as though in a little while the solution would be found, and then a new and splendid life would begin; and it was clear to both of them that they had still a long, long road before them, and that the most complicated and difficult part of it was only just beginning.”

Did Anna and Gurov reach at any decision? Did they enjoy the elixir of life together? Was it really elixir? The narrator needs not respond to these questions. The reader can think of these questions and their possible answers. Chekhov thought of only some harmless romantic interludes.

Chekhov stories have a taste of mild humour in the stillness of some sad and silent atmosphere. One can rarely find any exuberant or lethargic character in his short stories. His short story 'The Death of a Government Clerk' is very popular. Ivan Dmitrivich Chervyakov is the clerk. When he was watching a stage event, he sneezed unwittingly on to the back of Civil General Brechilov, a senior officer. He realized his mistake and wanted to apologise for the same. When he did apologise, the officer did not mind it. He again apologised, and also went to officer's office and tendered another apology. That officer felt that this clerk was fooling him. When the clerk requested the General not to misunderstand him, he was asked to get out. Very slowly he returned home and fell on a sofa with his uniform on and died. The innocence of that little clerk would make us smile inwardly but we cannot laugh at him. While thinking of the helplessness, insignificance and foolhardiness of that junior clerk before the high official would certainly move us but we cannot laugh at him.

There are several stories written by

Chekhov, which make us inwardly smile. His 'Chameleon' is another story of this category. The main characters of this story are a dog of a General, a police inspector and a goldsmith bitten by the dog. As the ownership of the dog changes, the attitude of the police inspector changes. The inspector boasts about his intention of teaching a lesson to the owner of the dog that bites the people on the road. When he was told that the dog belonged to a very senior General, inspector changed tracks. Then

here. Among our novelists and dramatists none except Thakazhi was inspired by Chekhov. Pottakkat learnt his craft from Maupassant. Ponkunnam Varkey, Kesavadev and Basheer entered the scene as social reformers. Chekhov cannot be a guide to them. Those who can remember the 18 forearm-length Sari like story of Uroob cannot even remember Chekhov. The eloquence of N Mohanan, emotions of M T, the hollow laughter of V K N and the perplexity of T Padmanabhan also cannot come from

Chekhov. Finally we had only a Madhavikutty to emulate the style of Chekhov. She also without fail eliminated the first and last parts of story structure. She always went straight to introduce the main characters. Her endings are also abrupt. Her 'Neypayagam' starts thus:

“The cremation was held in a minimal way; the colleagues from office were thanked profusely, and returned home. That man whom we can call father. Now

there are only three children who knew his value in this town. They call him 'father.'

Father and three children; the characters were introduced. Someone died, could be mother of the children. No one else would know his value and that person is not the group. What is stated is that the colleagues are thanked after the ritual of cremation. There are no close relations to the father and children in that town, implying they are away from native place. One paragraph and many details! The story started without any preface.

Early morning the children were woken up, father and children were sent off to office and school. When the children returned from school, their mother was alright but by the time the husband returned she was lying on the floor dead; heart failure. Hasn't he got anything to remember about her? He was thinking about her while returning home by bus. They were in love earlier and then got married. A life full of ups and downs! They together built several imaginary mansions. “Unni, can you afford now to sleep fully covered in a blanket? Today is Monday” her calling in the morning still echoes in his ears.



Books By Kamala Das

he was informed that the General did not have a dog, his attitude again changed. As and when the ownership of the dog changed, his approach oscillated. Instead of the crime, inspector concentrates on the person and this vacillation makes Chekhov mock at the system.

The influence of Chekhov was visible in the early stories of Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai but later he got away from it. So we would not discuss it



Anton Chekhov

All these through his remembrance! When he reached home, his youngest son rushes to him and tells him, "Mother has not come yet."

He held the hands of the child and walked to the kitchen. Eldest son also joined them. Second son continues to sleep. All the food his wife prepared earlier is neatly kept there. Though it was touched by death, the children consumed the food prepared by their mother. They do not want rice, want only neypayasam. "... mother made very good neypayasam."

"Henceforth they would never have food prepared by her," he thought while watching them consuming the payasam. He was sitting on the wooden plank normally used by his wife. When he heard the comments of the son, he proceeded to bathroom to hide his tears.

Story ends here. What did he do with children? Did the children ask for mother next day? Did he marry again? Madhavikutty does not answer these questions. She concentrated only on the completeness of the emotions of that single minute. Neypayasam prepared by his wife before she died, and the children relishing it without being aware of her death, the burden of sadness on account of bereavement; Madhavikutty points out to these issues.

You too can share her feelings and sigh with her. That single minute is longer than one life.

A dramatic beginning and an implied end! Stories written by Chekhov and Madhavikutty are similar. A story need not be successful because of the similarity. Drama should be from beginning till end of the narration. What do we mean by drama? The content, the minute details mentioned should touch the heart of the readers based on their experiences to arouse their curiosity and amazement. Not a single word in any

of the stories of Madhavikutty tires the reader. She had a special skill to choose her verbs and build on them.

On two accounts Madhavikutty remain aloof from Chekhov. In her stories, humour is seldom found. Even an intense scrutiny would fail to excavate a humour in her story. There could be a shadow of humour in her 'Kulhakkozhikal' (Water fowls). When a sixteen year old boy embraces his fifteen year old girl friend to be married off next day, for a second and consoles her saying, "Now Ammini can marry anyone, I have no objection as you are already married to me, understand?" we cannot but smile for a second. When Aparna Roy forcefully embraces Arunachalam (Arunachalathinte Katha), he turns red with coyness and hurt pride and tells her that she is unwell and needs rest at home, we might smile again but such instances are few and far.

Second issue there has not much variation in her story content. This is significant when we compare them. However, when compared to her contemporaries, she is far ahead of them.

There are certain elements in her stories that draw our attention. Her favourite storyline is to draw pity over

the losses on account of suffocating home life despite having an enjoying and lovely childhood. 'Punahsamagamam' and 'Naricheerhukal Parhakkumbol' are examples to this storyline. A poor young man in love with the daughter of a rich man; he rises in stature over a period of time while the girl slumps, the young man could be husband, paramour or an unattainable celestial musician. He strives hard to rise in stature and be rich and finally attains his aim but loses all interest in life, leads a lonely life; such a man could be seen in many of her stories. An unsatisfied woman, wife, lover and many similar characters with slight changes also could be seen. Some of them are compelled to carry the burden of societal status of their parents and thus hate them silently. Madhavikutty paints such children also.

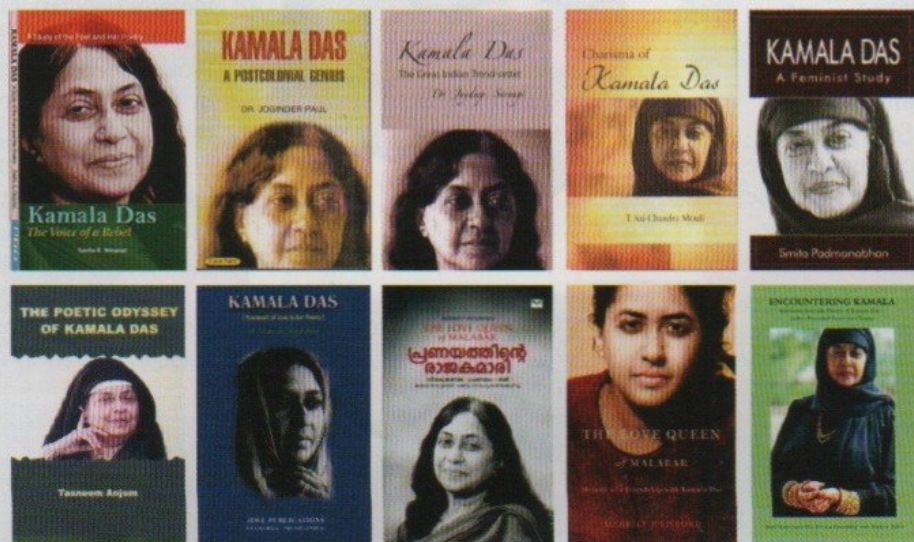
Yet, 'Snehikkappetta Stree', 'Virunnukaran', 'Ammu', 'Manushyan Paavamanu', 'Doctorhute Maranham', 'Pakshiyute Manham', 'Neypayasam', 'Arunhachalathinte Katha', 'Chuvanna Paavata' etc are different imageries. Probably their ideas are obtained from different sources. The earlier mentioned ideas are repeated several times, they could be based on own experiences or deviations of thereof. If two or three

stories are based on the same idea, readers get a chance to accuse the writer of repetition.

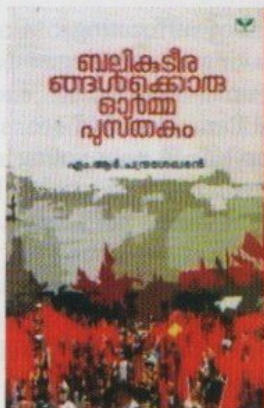
Stories of Madhavikutty are more or less like odes of a poet. When we throw a pebble into a calm and serene waterbody, it creates ripples in it and the small waves move towards the shores and embrace them. A shock in the life of a poet also can create such waves and we call them by different names. When these waves are created in prosody, they touch our soul and music emanates from it. When these shocks become experiences of certain characters and narrated in short stories, Madhavikutty stories are born. ■



Kamala Das in Translation



Books on Kamala Das

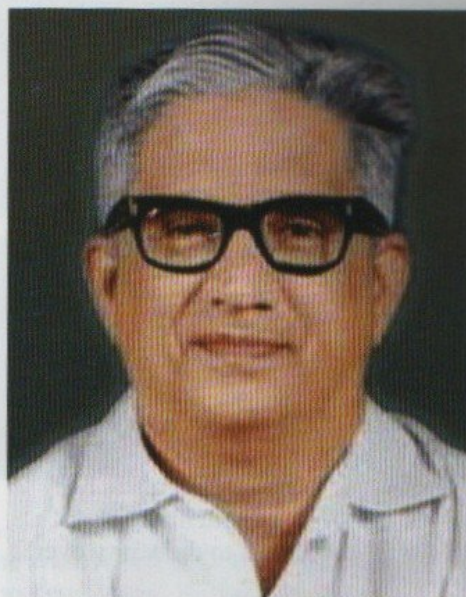


It happened with MRC

ACHUTHA MENON Vs ACHUTHANANDAN

All India Trade Union Congress, the first trade union of workers was founded by Indian National Congress activists. When it was gaining popularity and fame, Communists covertly penetrated it and made it their union. The same thing happened with Samastha Kerala Sahitya Parishad, established by litterateurs of Travancore, Kochi and Malabar regions but once CPI leaders penetrated it, many of the stalwarts left it to rot and the literary world of Kerala was never the same. Several litterateurs tried to bring effective substitutes but did not succeed.

The three regions that later formed Kerala State, had many educational institutions run by government and by private managements that included religious and communal organisations. Though government and non-government managements ran the institutions with the same syllabi, there were several issues that went against the employees of private managements. Their union AKPCTA (All Kerala Private College Teachers Association) was formed to strive to get parity in all respects with government run institutions and the union was struggling. The main reason of the failure was the division among the employees on the lines of political affiliations, submission to managements and the lethargy to get involved in street agitations. The teachers felt that being post graduates, it was beyond them to



C Achutha Menon



V S Achuthanandan

agitate like illiterate labourers. In 1973, K C Chacko of CMS College, Kottayam and M R Chandrasekharan of S S College, Taliparamba were the President and the secretary respectively of AKPCTA. MRC collected relevant data from the private colleges under their unions and went with Chacko to meet CM C Achutha Menon for whom he arranged a shelter during the struggle of Communist Party. CPI (M) was indirectly putting pressure on the union to tow the party line. Though MRC was a strong supporter of the Party, he could not follow the logic of the Party wielding authority over the union especially when it had only around 5% of the Party sympathisers as members. In the meeting with the CM, university officers and collegiate director were also present. All the proposals made by Chacko, treasurer Narendran were vetoed by them. Then Achutha Menon asked MRC about the number of people affected by 'super numerary'. Quoting the statistics from the college, MRC told him 'slightly above 160.'

Instantly the government officials opposed it saying that that issue was already rejected. CM told them that the government could not agree to terminate those people. The affected people should be paid. Officials rebutted it saying that those appointments were not approved.

Achutha Menon chided them for not taking action on time and that he could not deny them job and salary on those grounds. When CM was found firm on

his resolve, all important issues were decided in favour of the teachers.

When Prof R Ramachandran Nair was President of AKPCTA, he tied the union in the stable of CPI(M). He made AKPCTA to be part of several agitations of other trade unions wherein the college teachers had no issues to be resolved. When AKPCTA held a convention at Kollam in 1983, S Ramachandran Pillai attended a fraction meeting and decided to hold an agitation against the Karunakaran government and all unions affiliated to CPI (M) should participate in it and as such AKPCTA was to be compelled to join it. MRC, president of AKPCTA then, did not agree with the decision as his union did not have even 50 members sympathetic to the Party. Further the union had many senior professors and female teachers who were not willing to join the agitation. SRP did not like MRC's stand. When AKPCTA decided not to join the agitation, SRP compelled MRC to attend the fraction meeting in which

many members of various unions affiliated to the party were participating. VS, SRP and Puthalath Narayanan were also attending the meeting. MRC felt that the move was a trap. He offered to resign from the post of President of AKPCTA but that was also denied. However the proposed agitation did not take place. Then MRC was summoned to AKG Centre where a list of accusations against him was presented. There VS, SRP, Puthalath, Prof Ramachandran Nair and V Narayanankutty were also present to give a judgement. The last mentioned stated that the President would have imposed participation on unwilling teachers. MRC did not agree to their views. VS talked contemptuously about college teachers and MRC protested. VS then asked MRC to confess his mistake but he refused. MRC told VS that he was the president and he had to take the side of the majority as per the democratic traditions. Then VS declared, "This comrade is suffering from democracy."

Nothing came out of the meeting. Nevertheless, MRC was forbidden from contesting to university senate as he was a member of syndicate earlier but I G Bhaskara Panicker who was member of Syndicate for eight years earlier was allowed to contest to senate. There were some more persons who were violating the rules. MRC filed nomination to senate and won the election. Though MRC thought earlier not to contest for the presidentship of AKPCTA, he filed nomination but was mysteriously defeated.

Since he was already elected to senate, MRC had no intention to contest to syndicate but the Party affiliated members spread the rumour that he was contesting for that seat also. Then MRC filed nomination for that seat too. Though Party tried its best to defeat him, by second votes, MRC defeated the Party's candidate Chandramohan.

MRC could have continued his service till he attained 60 years, but he opted for voluntary retirement when he reached 55 years. ■

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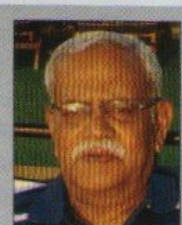
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THE UNCOMMONLY COMMON MAN

"If newspapers are the sentinels of democracy, cartoonists are the torch bearers of freedom of speech and expression", observed S C Jamir, former Governor of Maharashtra, when he was releasing the biography of India's greatest cartoonist- titled 'R.K.Laxman The Uncommon Man'-documented by Dr Dharmendra Bhandari. "Here is a document, on the creator of the world-famous uncommonly common man, based on and compiled from various literature / publications on him", he added.



K R Narayanan

■ Sir David Low is considered the father of the cartooning world and K Shankar Pillai the pioneer of Indian cartooning. R K Laxman, on the other hand, is a universally

acknowledged one-man institution of political humor and a national resource of satire. For about seven decades, he had been exposing - every morning - the vanity of the windbags, who rule the country and manage the affairs of the State.

A Cartoon not an Apple a Day

"Not an apple, as we have heard for so long, but it is a cartoon a day that keeps the doctor away", observed the Indian Express News Service, while referring to Laxman, who was the chief guest for distribution of prizes for an inter-school health essay contest in Pune (1999). *"Perhaps, one day the society will be cleansed of all doctors, if you all continue sincerely in your efforts,"* quipped the Magsaysay award-winner cartoonist, R. K. Laxman, referring to the health awareness programme of the Symbiosis Centre of Health Care (SCHC). *"If the Jayalalithas and Karunanidhis succeed in giving us an ideal society, I'll have to go and sit next to the jobless doctor,"* added he, with a mischievous smile, on that occasion. *"It was the mosquitoes and politicians that enabled doctors and cartoonists to survive. What subject will I sketch to earn my living, if*



R.K.Laxman

disease, poverty, ignorance and corruption are eradicated?" wondered this pragmatic cartoonist.

A Born Cartoonist

The ability to caricature was a natural instinct in Laxman. He did not have to go to Art Schools or other

institutions to learn cartooning. It was already within him, ever since he was born, and Laxman chose drawing for his optional subject in the high school. Those were the days when this subject was looked upon as something fit only for predetermined high school dropouts.

Cartooning and Laxman

Attributing the origin of cartoon drawing to Britain, Laxman said, we acquired this art from the British during the Raj. On his own evolution as a cartoonist, he says, "As a child, I had a penchant for drawing and over the years perfected this skill".

As a student in the middle school, he used to draw cartoons for a Kannada magazine called *Koravanji* and later for *My India*, an English periodical of those days. He had no masters, no guidance, and no training schools and was self-taught, self-made and (in his own words) "a self-drawnman". Caricaturing had been innate in Laxman. He vividly remembers in his autobiography - *The Tunnel of Time* his drawing on the floors of their big house in Mysore, which would invite the wrath of the elders in the household.

He also remembers an incident



about his primary teacher asking the pupils to draw a leaf in their free period. "When it was my turn", writes Laxman, "he (the teacher) stared at the drawing for an alarmingly long time and asked me, 'did you draw it yourself, Laxman? I was frightened and stepped back, expecting a shower of blows. I replied, you asked us to draw, Sir. I sat there and drew..... Fumbling for a safe excuse'. To his greatest surprise, the teacher held his slate up before the class and announced: 'Attention! Look how nicely Laxman has drawn the leaf!' He then turned to Laxman and said: 'You will be an artist one day! Keep it up'".

The teacher's prediction did not go wrong!

This unexpected encouragement made him to think of himself as an artist in the making, and never doubted his destiny thereafter. Laxman drew objects that caught his eye outside the window of his room - the dry twigs, leaves and lizard-like creatures crawling about, the servant chopping firewood and, of course, the crows in various postures on the rooftops of the buildings opposite. Later, when the



Laxman's Common Man at Worli Seaface

drawing teacher (a product of the famous J.J. School of Arts) set a wooden cube to teach the perspective and illusion of parallel lines, meeting at infinity, Laxman was the only one to draw it.

Like his brilliant brother, R K Narayan, Laxman also has made substantial contribution to Indian English writing. But it is his silent caricature and cartooning that spoke in a thousand tongue about the inadequacies of the social, economic and political systems of the country.

Most of the literary works of his elder brother, R K Narayan, carried Laxman's illustrations. The impressive sketches of the Malgudi Railway

station, Lawly statue, the streets, horse-drawn carts, the shops and the inhabitants of Narayan's imaginary world were beautifully enlivened by his sibling's pen.

Laxman's Common Man

The Common Man, the legendary protagonist of Laxman has been representing the ordinary Indian citizen *Aam Aadmi* - from the late 1940s. As a mute, or at times confused witness, along with his wife, neighbours, politicians, or many other characters, he brought out very effectively the public grievances, inflation, corruption, deteriorated/collapsing infrastructure, common poverty, official greed, apathy

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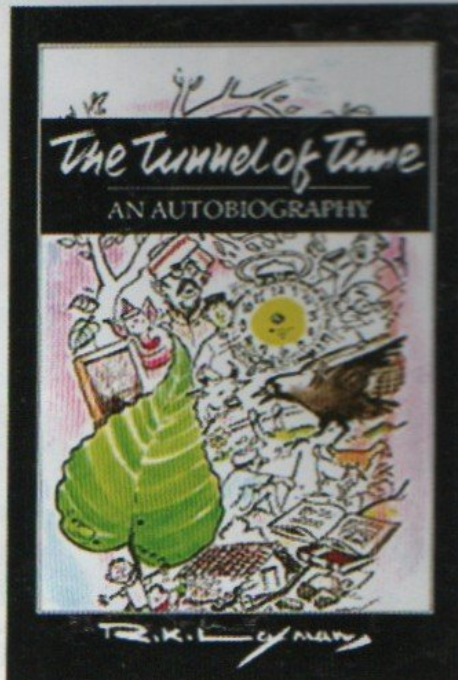
of the rulers to the peoples' sufferings, man-made disasters, natural catastrophes and the like, with uniform intensity. Laxman is the uncommon creator of that embarrassed and voiceless common man who represents the millions of this country.

There is no single attribute that is common to all Indians. So, Laxman created a mythical character in a striped coat, with a bushy moustache, a bald head with a white wisp of hair at the back, a bulbous nose on which is perched a pair of glasses. He has thick black eyebrows permanently raised, expressing bewilderment. He stood for all Indians and goes through life without uttering a word. But he watches with amusement the ironies, paradoxes and contradictions of the human situations in his own country. Laxman mentioned about his common man as: *"Like most Indians, he sees his country being forced through endless indignities by its leaders and yet doesn't even whimper in protest. He has perfected docility as a survival strategy"*.

It is said that the Common Man's birth was about four or five years after Laxman's joining the Times of India. For half a century, every morning, this Common Man, confronted India's latest heartbeat with a kind of wry resignation.

Fascination for crows

Laxman's fascination for crows is well-known. He talks passionately about his first love the crows- like this:



"I get away from everything by drawing crows." He loved its color, voice and activity and, without knowing, he started liking the crows. His comments about his own fascination for crows were: *"All my life I have painted crows. Singly, in pairs, threesomes, whole murders of them."* But, he broke off to chuckle at the word 'murder' and continued *"Don't look so horrified. Murder is the collective noun for crows"*. Even as a child he had been fascinated by them. In his opinion, they were smart, lively and had a strong survival instinct. *"The common crow is really an uncommon bird"*, he often said. Laxman had held exhibitions of his

drawings of crows of different shades of black in varying moods and poses.

Though not much religious, Laxman's favorite deity had always been the playful elephant god Ganesha. He drew this God with great dexterity and vigor. To his artistic eyes, the rotund form seemed to manifest itself everywhere - in a tree trunk, a weather-beaten boulder, a drifting cloud, etc.

The Undisputed Genius

If anybody asks what is so special about Laxman, the celebrity cartoonist had a ready answer: *"My genius, what else?"*

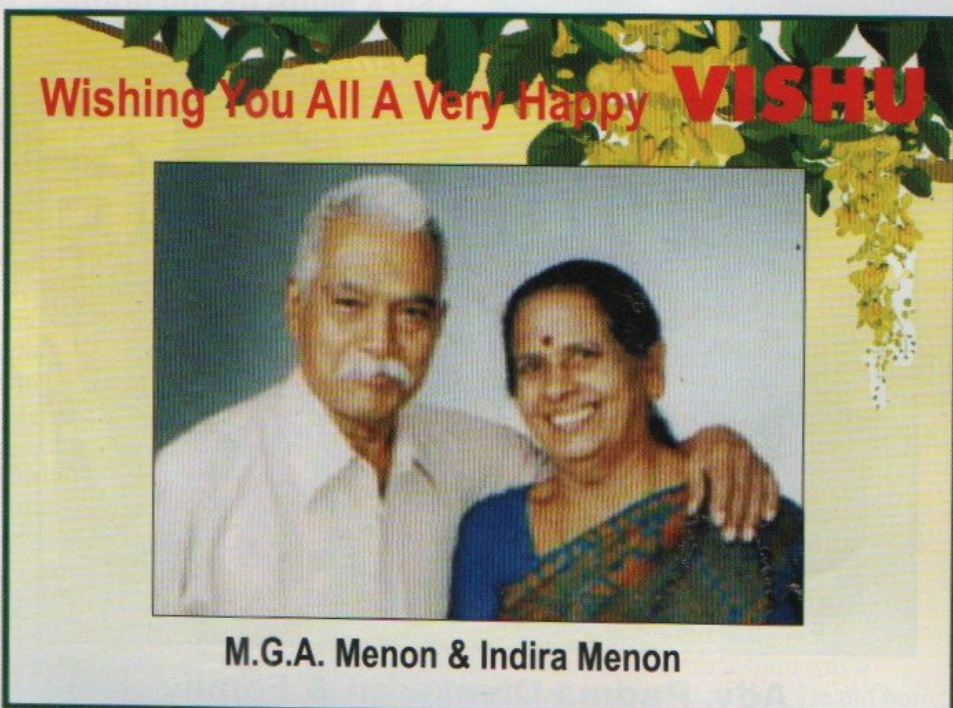
"A little humility is not a bad thing if you are at the top," feels Sudhir Dhar, another leading cartoonist of India, in the Illustrated Weekly of India. He recounts another story as well in this conjunction. When the American cartoonist Ranan Lurie asked him who the best Indian cartoonist was, Laxman flashed back, *"I am."* The second, third, fourth, fifth.. The best man on the job? Laxman continued to repeat, *"I am."* Laxman has no hassles about his own greatness or a sense of superiority over others who are not able to see things as he sees them.

Laxman went on receiving awards after awards. Some of them were: B.D. Goenka Award (Indian Express), Durga Ratan Gold Medal (Hindustan Times), Padma Bhushan (Govt. of India), Padma Vibhushan (Govt. of India), Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts 1984, Lifetime Achievement Award for Journalism-CNN IBN TV 18 and like.

The Other side of the Genius

Laxman was blunt and transparent in his dealings with others. Hypocrisy was something that had never come near him. He was kind, soft, very emotional, and cried easily. At the convocation of the Bombay University, when Dr. Kalam (the then President of India) hugged him, Laxman just cried and cried and Dr. Kalam asked him, *"Laxman you make the world laugh every morning, how can you cry now?"*

Some people, however, opined that Laxman needed to do more than just make people smile. *"He doesn't take a debate forward,"* said cartoonist and Malayalam litterateur O.V. Vijayan once. *"There is no political comment, only political statement,"* echoed *"his nephew Ravi Shankar, cartoonist and then*



Deputy Editor, India Today. But, argued the Hindu's cartoonist Keshav: "Laxman puts us on the spot. The common man is helpless in his country; he chokes with frustrations and fury. Laxman's cartoons convert this rage into humor."

While Laxman had a keen eye for the idiosyncrasies of others, he took great care to safeguard his own conservativeness in his tastes and general obsession with rapid change. The fluctuations of fashion did not register on his oscilloscope. He never changed from his white bush shirt and black trousers that he wore to work for 50 years, although he would dress quite neatly for the occasions.

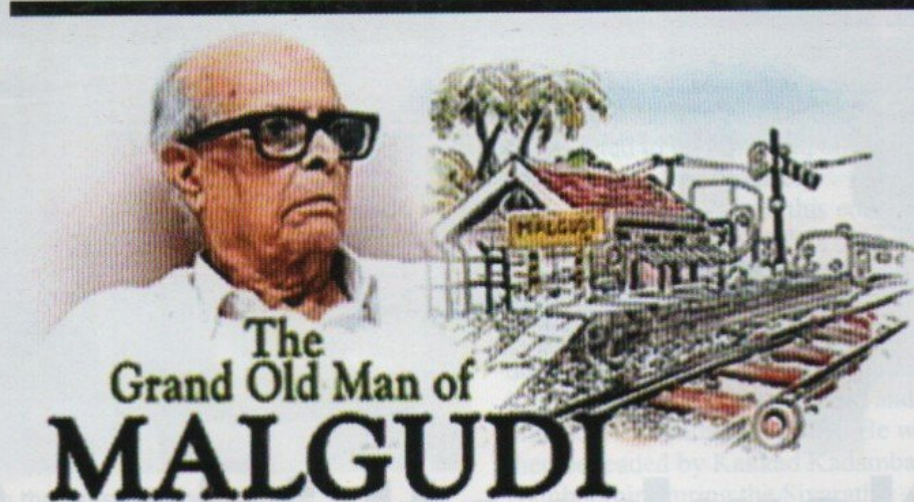
He felt that there was no leadership in this country and added (with sardonic humor) that the likes of Narendra Modi would help. He often added that at least in India some of us were aware as to where we were heading, but the US is unaware of where it was going.

It is said that Laxman had his own reservations on the brilliance of our techno-whiz youth. He had nothing against the pursuit of technical excellence but felt it should not be at the cost of simple general knowledge. In the olden days, he used to say, the youngsters were quick-witted abounding in general knowledge about everything around them. But, the so-called techno-savvy youngster drew a blank when asked a plain question about his neighborhood! "If this generation is to be called smarter than the forefathers, God bless them", felt Laxman.

The environmentalist in Laxman came to the fore when he vociferously denounced the commercial hoardings that strike a visitor to Hyderabad. "There are two things that have made the twin cities ugly: hoardings and loud music. Those monstrous hoardings blocking every structure have ruined Hyderabad. The city seems to be sick with commercial hoardings screaming consumer durables' advertisements. They distract the attention of the commuters and overshadow the ambience of anything and everything. Should concern for commercial advertisements bypass all aspects of aesthetics in this city?" he questions.

The Genes of Greatness

It is a matter of considerable interest that two of India's most outstanding



achievers are brothers. Possibly, their background played a formative part in the creative geniuses of R.K. Narayan and R.K. Laxman.

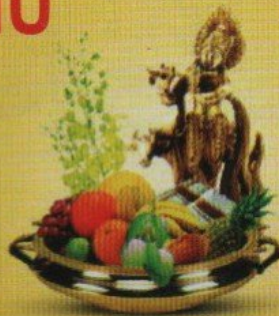
The journalist N. Ram said: "*Their autobiographies, Narayan's My Days, published in 1974, and Laxman's The Tunnel of Time, which I have just read, provide clues towards an explanation of how one family can produce two such outstanding creative figures. It happens very rarely but it has happened hereabout. They express individual genius, which has always defied explanation, but they are also products of a particular family and social milieu that has been congenial to creativity: liberal and modern in outlook yet imbued with strong values and laidback integrity and respectful of independence and originality.*"

While the entire world praises his cartoons, Laxman did not seem to agree with them. According to him he had not drawn his best cartoon yet.

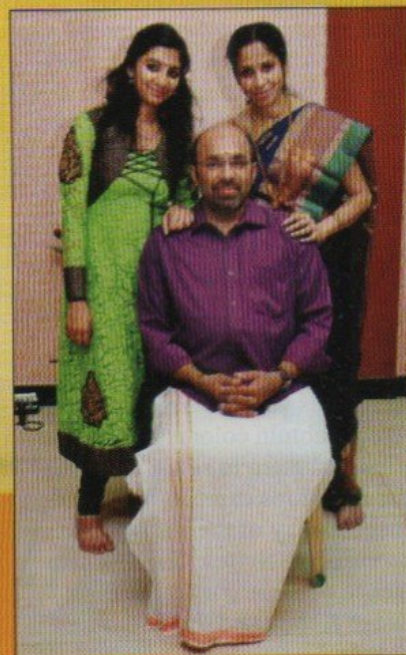
The Nation's Salute

The "Lifetime Achievement Award" was bestowed upon him at the ripe age of the 84. Laxman virtually broke down and wept like a child, as the former president Dr A P J Abdul Kalam and the Vice President, Hamid Ansari, joined the audience in standing up and saluting a common man who had become uncommon in the modern India. No one seems to have been honored in this manner in any country before. Therein lies the greatness of this uncommonly common man called R K Laxman. ■

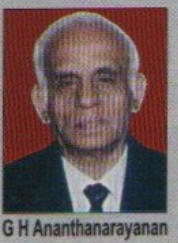
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Namboothiris of Kerala



G H Ananthanarayanan

Origin

Namboothiris may be descendents of the Aryans who came and settled down in Kerala. The word "Namboothiri" is said to have originated from the

two terms Nambu meaning trust and Thiri meaning Shri. This perhaps is only linguistic juggling.

It seems that the first batch of immigrants came to Kerala in the third century B C immediately after the advent of the Jains and the Buddhists. During the Sangam Age, immigration of Brahmins into Kerala continued uninterrupted, though on a small scale. Mayura Varman, the Kadamba king (345 to 379 A.D.) and his son named Chandrangathan are said to have invited large groups of Brahmins and settled them in Kerala and Thulava countries. Many more of such batches of Brahmin immigrants might have come to Kerala in the post-Sangam Age. The domination of Kerala by other South Indian powers like the Chalukyas, the Pallavas and the Rashtrakutas in the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries might have given impetus to the process of Aryanisation. The Western Chalukyas who were Vaishnavites seem to have despatched several Brahmin colonists and encouraged them to settle in Kerala. Vedic Brahmins came in batches during the ascendancy of the Rashtrakutas who were chiefly Saivites. There is also evidence of close cultural contact between Kerala and the Pallava kingdom.

In the 8th century, the Aryanisation

of Kerala reached its zenith with a major influx of Brahmin immigrants. This had its impact on the religious and cultural fields as well. The new Aryan missionaries devoted themselves to propaganda against Buddhism and Jainism. They established Hindu temples on a large scale with a view to popularizing Hindu religion. Several temple arts and festivals were introduced with the same motive. The worship of Gods like Vishnu, Siva etc. was made popular by the savants of the Bhakti cult. Non-Aryan deities and practices were also accommodated within the Hindu fold. The Dravidian Goddess Kottavai was accepted in the form of Durga, Kali and Bhagavathy and absorbed in the Hindu pantheon. The popular non-Aryan deity Sastha came to be looked upon as Hari Hara



Namboothiri six decades ago

Puthra, the son of Vishnu and Siva (Hara). There was thus a synthesis of Aryan ideas and Dravidian ideas. With the increasing spread of Hindu religion, the importance and dominance of Namboothiris also increased.

Class Divisions

There are two broad divisions among Namboothiris one having the right to chant the Vedas called Othullavar and others who do not have such right called 'Othillathavar'. This was not so in the early days when everyone after 'Upanayanam' (Sacred thread ceremony), one of the sixteen Samskaras prescribed for Brahmins, had Muthalmura, the right to chant the Samhita part of the Vedas from beginning to end. After that only, a Samavarthanam (a ritual associated with the return of a Brahmachari from Gurukulam) could be performed. But quite a few could not or did not learn the Vedas, so that gradually they forfeited the right to do so. Othullavar slowly began to treat Othillavathavar as an inferior breed.

In course of time, the class distinctions deepened and there came about eight sub-classes or sub-castes among them. They are Thamburakkal, Aadhyans, Vasishta Brahmanan, Samanya Brahmanan, Jathiya maithreyan, and Sankethikan.

Sapagrasthan and Papishtan: Thamburakkals are considered to be the blue-blooded among them, enjoying the highest position in society and having the right to pronounce authoritative opinion on Vedic studies. Azhuvancheri Thamburakkal is the only family in this class existent today. There are eight families extant in the Addhyan class.



Namboothiri serving the cause of God

They belong to the houses called Kalakandath, Mezhatol, Mathur, Kalukkallur, Chemangad, Pazhoor, Muringoth and Vellangallur. All Aadhyans do not appear to be covered by these houses nor do they belong to all the Vedas. The origin of these houses according to legend is that Parasurama had brought a very noble and learned Brahmin from the banks of the Krishna River and appointed him as the Yogyathiri of the Thrissur Sabha. He had eight sons who set up eight different houses. This version is said to be flawed since the eight belonged to eight different Gothras. Whatever might be the truth of this, the Aadhyans Namboothiris were great scholars and big landlords owning vast chunks of land.

Vasishta Brahmins were engaged in the performance of Yagnas.

Samanya Brahmins were mostly engaged as Thantris (priests) in temples. Some were also Mantravadis (exorcists) and astrologers. Some were engaged in the recital of the Puranas.

Jathimaithreyans practiced medicine. They were renowned doctors and were called Ashta Vaidyas. There was one class among Jathimaithreyans who were called 'Sastrangakar' engaged in the martial arts. They were put in a class called 'Pathinettu Sangamum Padutholum'. Each Sangham had six Kalaris (school of martial arts), each having its own method of training and each having its own peculiar characteristics.

Each group had three 'Koorukal', viz., Bhattam, Prabhakaram and Vyakaranam. The Sanghakkali (a kind of drama) was created by this class. This type of drama consists of religious observances, training in martial arts and entertainment.

Santhethikans are a mixture of Keralites, Tuluites and Kannadigas, and they are called Embrans. They are mostly engaged as priests in temples and in chanting of the Vedas. It is found in some ancient writings that a deity in a temple used to be called 'Emberuman', meaning my God. According to some scholars, the term "Embran" originated from the term "Emberuman".

Sapagrashtas are those who are the cursed among Namboothiris. They are placed way down in the social ladder. One rung below them is the Papishtas. These two are so called because of the unethical conduct in which some of them had indulged in. Even so they had certain rights such as the right to offer Soma juice when Namboothiris performed a Yaga. (Soma is the juice of a milky flowering plant (*Asclepias acida*), extracted and fermented, forming a beverage offered in libations

to the deities, and drunk by the Brahmanas. The Gods were represented as being equally fond of it. It was raised to the position of a deity, and represented to be primeval, all-powerful, healing diseases).

It may be relevant in this context to take a peek into the origin of Nambidis Namboothiri Nambidis and Nair Nambidis. According to social historians, the last Cheraman Perumal decided to embrace Buddhism under the influence of his Buddhist friend and philosopher Sundaramoorthy. He was then beheaded by Kakkad Kadamban Namboothiri during the Sivarathi festival at an assembly of Namboothiris because of their apprehension that the change of religion by the King might give rise to social and religious anarchy and destabilize the State. Kadamban Namboothiri was the brother-in-law of the Perumal, besides being the Prime Minister and Thaliathiri. After the murder, he went to the assembly of Namboothiris in a temple. Because of the guilt felt by him on account of his murdering a king, he did not enter the temple but sat on the threshold saying "NAAM PADIMEL", which got corrupted as Nambidi. These Nambidis were assigned a rank below Namboothiris proper and are not allowed to participate in Namboothiri religious festivals and temple festivals. They follow the matriarchal system and are classified as Kshatriyas. The most important of such Nambidi families are the local Chieftains of Manakulam, Cheralayam, Eliyangad, Punnathur and

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Chittanjur. Their family diety is Vettakkorumakan.

Nair Nambidhis came to be so called because the bodyguard of Kakkad Kadamban Namboothiri was a Nair and his status was consequently elevated after that event and made a Chieftain in Kollengod region. Kollengod Raja is a Samantha Kshatriya with a sacred thread. He cannot offer Soma juice for Yaga rituals but only Soma Latha.

Anacharams (Irregular or special customs) Namboothiris have many customs and practices different from others. They are called 'Anacharams' or irregular or special customs. They are found in Sankara Smriti and are 64 in number. A number of Anacharams related to maintenance of hygiene and cleanliness and good habits such as cleaning of teeth first thing the morning, having bath before sunrise, not serving food with hand or eating left-over food, having food in small handfuls so that it will easily be digested, prohibition of intoxicating drinks etc. Some related to the observance of Brahmacharyam, the importance of Grahasthashramam by stipulating that the eldest son shall always enter this Ashram, prohibition of

dowry, the Samskaras to be performed. How cremation should be done, how and why Shraaddha should be performed, prohibiting a widow from jumping into the funeral pyre of her late husband etc. There are a few others which have little meaning or have lost their relevance. But overall they were meant to keep the Namboothiris on the straight and narrow path of a clean and disciplined life.

Mantram, Tantram, Yantram, Mantravadam

People generally have faith in the efficacy of prayers and Hindus in particular believe that Vedic prayer mantras chanted in a special manner and with proper intonation would be more effective to bring quick results. Tantris and Mantravadis are specially trained for this purpose. Yantram is a divinized talisman prepared to order by the Tantri or Mantravadi. Mantravadam involves divination and invocation of good spirits to counter bad ones and is performed with appropriate Mantram and Tantram. This is usually done on the prescription of astrologers who alone know which

evil spirit is playing foul and how it is to be exorcised.

Yantram and Mantravadam seem to go together. Even people of other faiths covertly engage Namboothiri Tantris and Mantravadis to perform such exorcising ceremonies or for the preparation of Yantrams.

Even after the Namboothiris lost their political influence and special privileges as Janmis (landowners) by the end of the 18th century following the Muslim invasion from Mysore, these functions kept them occupied and useful to society.

Butt of Ridicule

While the world changed with the spread of modern education, Namboothiris remained in seclusion and averse to any change. When a Namboothiri could not catch up with the changes in society, he often became an object of ridicule and was even befooled. Quite a few had a joke at his expense as an entertainment. Soon writers caricatured him as laughing stock. Namboothiris are generally accustomed to laughing at themselves as well as at others and did not mind being made fun of. And sometimes they

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Namboothiri wedding decades ago

would even join the jokes and laugh.

The Priestly Guild

The Vaidikan, Othikkan and Tantri form a priestly guild to cater to the religious needs of a group of Namboothiri families. Every Namboothiri Illam had a Vaidikan or Othikkan in connection with its rites, rituals or ceremonies and a Tantri for ceremonies in the temple or temples it managed. The Vaidikan is a person with Vedic training. The Othikkans are supervisors of Namboothiri rights and ceremonies and they are also entitled to teach the Vedas and Sastras. Tantries are masters of religious rites in temples and their services are needed not only by the Namboothiris and Kshatriyas but also by the Nair communities in their houses as well as in their temples. The Tantri claims to invest divinity in the idol through Vedic Mantras and Tantram at the time of its consecration and to revitalize it periodically.

Dress, Dwelling and Inheritance Rights

In the matter of dress, the Namboothiris wore a white dress and a towel across the shoulder. While performing religious rites, they would wear a somewhat longer dhoti, the form of wearing which is called 'Thattudukkal'. Females who are called 'Antharjanams' wore dhoti in a manner called 'njerinjudukkal', resembling something like a long breech but stretching below the knees. The habit of wearing a blouse was not there

among them. The Namboothiri women confined themselves to the kitchen or to places near it and when they stepped out, they would cover their body with a piece of cloth called 'Seela' and then

also have a Marukuda (a palm leaf parasol) to hide their face. They would step out of the house only with a female escort while going to a temple. If going to a distant place they would be accompanied by a male servant too besides the female escort. The rule was that no male member shall cast his eye on a female Namboothiri.

A Namboothiri dwelling place is called an Illam. According to a scholar, the first part of the word is Telugu and the second, Tulu. The style of architecture of an Illam is called Nalukettu. A Nalukettu consists of a square open ground in the middle with open verandahs on the four sides with entry from there to rooms. If the status of the family was high, there would be two Nalukettus adjoining each other and such a pair of Nalukettus was called Ettukettu. Those who were very well to do would build more than one storey. This style is no longer in existence. Close to the Illam there would be a temple in some cases.

(To be Contd.)



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'RUTHU' MYTHOLOGY



Parur S. Ganesan

■ In the recent years, menstruation which is a part of human (female) biological system has come to a great deal of debate. Whether it is purely a natural biological

process essential for the development of humanity- or whether there is something impure about it- is being greatly discussed of late in several forums. Is the ban on the entry of females during the fecundity age (11 to 40) in the sacred Temple of Sabarimala and in a few temples on this ground justified, is also under scrutiny by the Supreme Court of India where the judges are unable to reach a unanimous decision and find a solution so far. The latest in this is the 'Padman' a movie produced by Akshay Kumar and Twinkle Khanna which has hit the movie screens all over India, but banned in Pakistan.

The taboo on this phenomenon, peculiar to only humans, is the outcome of the religious beliefs among Hindus carried forward through successive generations for centuries. The origin of menstruation is linked to releasing off of unpardonable sin committed by Devendra, King of the Heavens, vividly described in Uttarakanda of Valmiki Ramayanam and others like Padma Puranam. The story goes that Vrithra, genetically a Brahmin, who by curse became an all powerful demon brought all the worlds under his control, particularly the eco systems, and subjugated the people and the *devas* to

his reign of terror, causing unbearable inconvenience and suffering to them. Though a demon, he had all brahminical virtues and loved by his subjects. Devendra got nervous of his growing popularity and saw in him a great challenge to his own position. No one had the capacity to challenge or wage a war against this powerful demon. Finally all the Gods assembled together and selected Devendra to annihilate him and save the world and assured him of all support. Devendra who was fully aware that he was no match to the demon for a direct confrontation sought peace with him and displayed friendship covertly. Vrithra who trusted Devendra, no doubt took out a promise of absolute friendship. After gaining his confidence, Devendra laid a honey trap on him by using seductive Ramba and one day as he was in the process of love making with her, killed him surreptitiously. Vrithra no doubt died but out of him emerged "Brahmahatya"- a ferocious woman incarnating the sin of the deceptive murder. Everything went back to square one and the forceful sin did not spare anyone including Devendra himself who ran away beyond the territories of the world, lost all sense and closed himself in a corner senseless and nervous. There was no rain, all the rivers dried up, trees did not sprout and the seasons became erratic and unpredictable- there was famine and environmental crisis all over. The only way to bring back the world to normalcy, order and peace was to appease the furious Brahmahatya. All

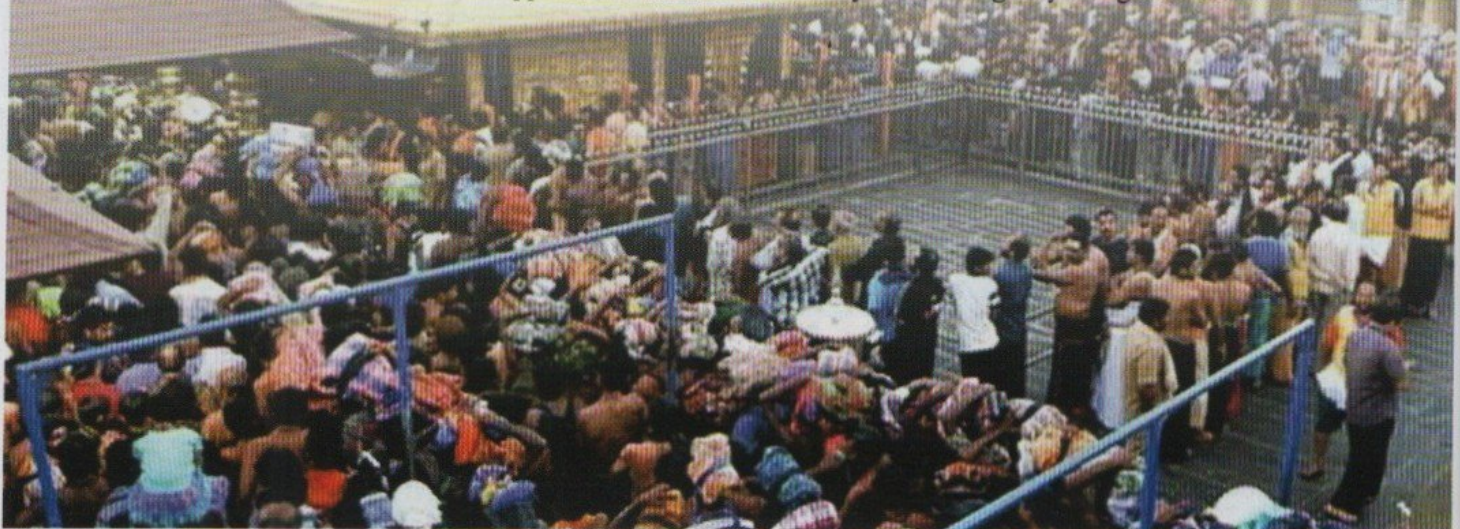
the Gods prayed and pleaded mercy with Brahmahatya and even conducted several yagnas to please her.. Finally, Brahmahatya condescended and agreed to relax the ferocity of the sin she was incarnate to save the world. She however had a problem. The ferocity and power of the sin was such that it had to be distributed. Brahmahatya offered to divide the sin into four parts and deposit it in four separate sectors so that its wrath would get diluted. The four parts identified for the deposit were:

- (i) Rivers, Froth and foam emerging out of flooded rivers during the monsoons;
- (ii) Trees, The milky, sticky sap flowing out of certain select group of trees like banyan, peepul, jack etc;
- (iii) Earth, Salt crystallizing out of deep water pans dug on earth; and
- (iv) Humans, On young women to emerge as blood released for three days every month.

Hence the bias and the taboo including untouchability during this period.

Originally referred to as "Rithu" (Season), over the years it is referred in several slangs, depending upon the place, time and group of people. In the elite circles it is also referred as 'Pushpini' (flowering). The practice of observing the three days is very much in vogue even now, though not with the rigid restrictions as in the earlier days. There have been some attitudinal relaxations.

The arrival of first menstruation on girls in the villages of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh etc. is treated with gaiety and great warmth and ladies of



the village get together around the girl and dance and sing. Some of these songs with a heavy dose of sexual bias bordering vulgarity explain to the girl what she is now capable of and also contain the 'dos and don'ts' for personal security and hygiene..

Hindu women during this "period" normally avoid going to temples and desist from poojas and even chant manthras or any acts associated with divinity as the strong in-built system of faith is menstruation in women is impure.

It may seem weird, but there is a temple in Kerala dedicated to a Goddess on menstruation. The legend goes that this deity was installed by none but the great Sage Agastya.

The story goes that when Lord Shiva was to marry Parvathy, all the Gods and Devas numbering over 30 crores assembled in mount Kailas in the Himalayas, to witness the great event. Due to sheer weight of such a huge gathering, mount Himalayas started tilting northward, if not sinking and Lord Shiva, the bridegroom got panicky and worried. He immediately rushed to Sage Agastya, who was also present there and prevailed upon him to move urgently to the South and stay put there so that the even balance could be maintained and the marriage would go well as planned. A very reluctant Sage Agastya agreed and rushed to Sonadri, a small hill in the Sahyadri Mountain in the South and stayed put there along the Pampa River. He could of course witness the wedding celebrations with his own divine eyes.

Marriage successfully over, Lord Shiva accompanied by Parvathy reached Sonadri Hills, in the South, the very next day to express their gratitude to the Sage for his great act of support and magnanimity. But even as they reached the spot, Parvathy experienced her first menstruation and had to wait for three full days to become pure and then only meet the great Sage. On the fourth day she had a formal bath in the nearby Pampa river before visiting the Sage. After the newlyweds departed to Himalayas, Sage Agastya installed a temple in commemoration of Parvathy's first menstruation, where the Goddess menstruates once in 27 days even now. This place Chengannur is about 40 kms from Kottayam.

It is rather paradoxical that the highly literate and equally progressive thinking Keralites totally believe and

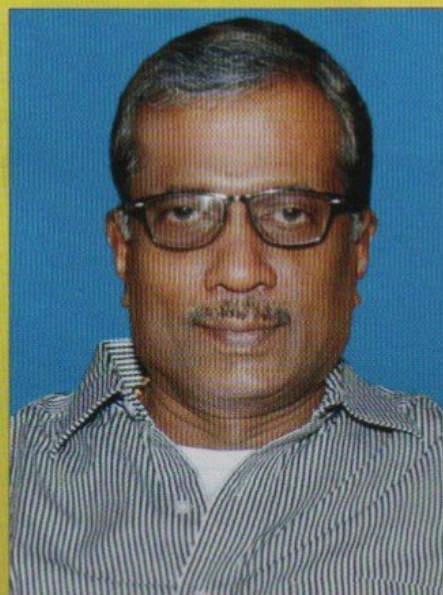
accept this phenomenon as a divine exercise. The linen worn on the idol (known as *thirupoothu* or *udayada*)) during this period (some of them with stains) is considered sacred, holy and a prized possession to be kept in the homes - even grabbed by devotees and worshipped. (Sometimes these are even auctioned!). In particular, parents of young girls, when they do not attain puberty at the right age, visit the temple and pray before the Goddess for puberty of their daughters and their prayers are invariably answered. Rationalists may scoff at this but this is true.

There is a very interesting story of divine retribution linked with this Goddess on no less a person than Sir Thomas Monroe the British Residency Governor and Diwan of Travancore who organised the take over of almost all the temples of Travancore State by the Government during the early 19th century. During one of his inspection visits to this temple, Monroe noticed an expenditure of 2 annas (12 paise now) every month on cloth used for the menstruation of the deity. Calling it a "nonsense and naivety" - a lifeless, metallic idol getting periods? - 'absurd and obscene!!' a furious Monroe stopped this monthly budget provision for this ritual with immediate effect. Even as he did this, his wife, an English woman, who had been accompanying him, experienced severe stomach pain and non-stop bleeding instantly. He rushed to Trivandrum but the hospitals

and doctors and all medications had no effect and the English woman continued to bleed and suffer. Someone in the palace consulted an astrologer and was told that the problem was due to Monroe insulting the powerful Goddess at Chengannoor. Monroe lost no time and immediately restored the funds and to the surprise of all and to the great relief of the lady the bleeding came to a sudden stop. A repentant Monroe made ample awards for his thoughtless action. He later visited the temple and by way of remorse and atonement and also to please the deity donated some gold ornaments to the Goddess on his own. He also found a Trust to manage and observe the above monthly ritual so special to the Goddess at Chengannur.

Even as the event is revered and celebrated, it is to be observed that impurity is still observed in the Temple. The Temple is closed to the public during the three days and a substitute idol is kept far away beyond the temple premises. On the fourth day this idol is taken in procession to the nearby Pampa river (where Parvathy took her cleansing bath) where it is given a ceremonial (cleansing) bath and brought back to the temple in procession seated over a female elephant and to the accompaniment of music, drums etc when the gates of the Temple are also reopened... ■

The author who has to his credit a number of publications touching upon varied subjects, lives in Mumbai.



Wishing
You All a
Very Happy
VISHU

Prakash Padikkal

Spirituality should make us do good and noble deeds:

Swami Aparajitananda

Swami Aparajitananda formerly known as Sujay Chaitanya is one of the well read, erudite and a promising teacher of Chinmaya Mission currently heading the Mangalore Chinmaya centre. An engineer by background Swamiji did his Vedanta course from Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai, Mumbai.



Sriprakash Menon

■ Aparajitananda is known for his lucid, simple and scholarly interpretation of scripture and was currently in Mumbai for various spiritual lecture series.

Aparajitananda has the spark of Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, simplicity of Swami Brahmanandaji and erudition of Guruji Tejomayanandaji.

Wishing all the readers a purposeful and spiritual year ahead, in an informal chat Swami Aparajitananda talks about concerning society, scriptures and spirituality.

Why is it that younger generation feels scriptural studies are for the elders. Don't you think knowledge of scriptures would have made them better candidates for competition in exams as well as life?

It is indeed unfortunate that younger generation has such a wrong notion. May be because they don't know what the scriptures are talking about. They think scriptures are all about mere ringing bells, showing arati and lighting the lamps. They think scriptures are all about life after death and have nothing to do with the modern man facing the challenges of life.

In fact, the truth is scriptures talk about how to face life with courage, confidence and optimism. Scriptures say that "O Man! You have

infinite potential in you. Tap that potential and be a superman!!"

No doubt, with the guidance of the scriptures, we can ensure success in all walks of life, whether studies or in our profession.

■ Do you think well to do families are focusing too much on material success than spiritual richness?

It is but natural because most of us don't know what spirituality can give us, how spirituality can transform us.

■ There is a trend especially among the young in Kerala to be part of

temple going crowd and to get actively involved in temple festivals yet many are alcoholics. Don't you think younger generation needs guidance and spiritual support?

True. We must understand that mere following rituals in the temple is not spirituality. True spirituality must make us a master of our mind and the senses. It must give us the strength to walk the path of good and noble. True spirituality must develop a sterling character in us. Only then we can be truly called spiritual; not by merely attending festivals in temples.

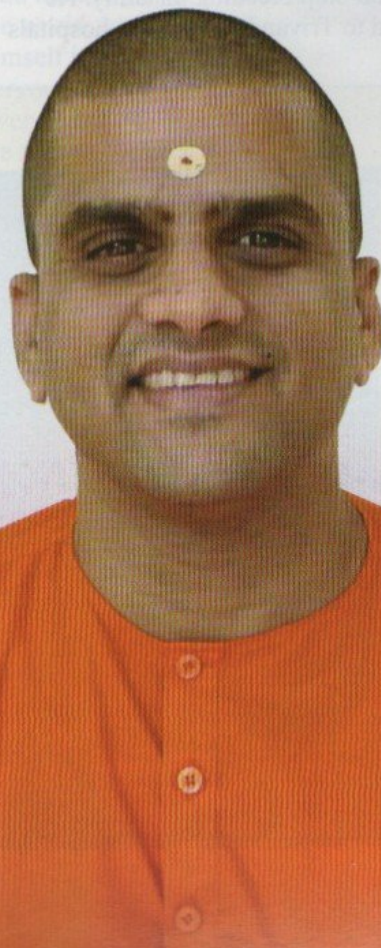
■ Culture is an important aspect of life. Do you feel the exposure to our heritage and legacy is lacking especially in schools?

True.

■ Swami Chinmayananda's focus was children and youth. What role parents can play in enriching the lives of their children?

Unless we become a role model for our child, we can never inspire our child. In the initial years, the child learns everything from the parents. The child learns not what they preach, but what they practice. Let us live the life of goodness and perfection before we preach it to our children. Only then our words will have effect. Our lives should be such that our children must feel,

"How noble is my father/mother! I must also become like him/her!"





■ **Lack of confidence and strength to withstand the worldly challenges are two factors driving youngsters to extremity. Can our spiritual wisdom help them to resolve these issues ?**

As I said earlier, spirituality points to us the infinite potential which lie within us untapped. Everyone is a born genius. Just like, when an ordinary computer is connected to the internet, it becomes an infinite source of information, so too when an ordinary mortal is connected to the Spiritual Essence in oneself, he becomes an embodiment of wisdom and perfection.

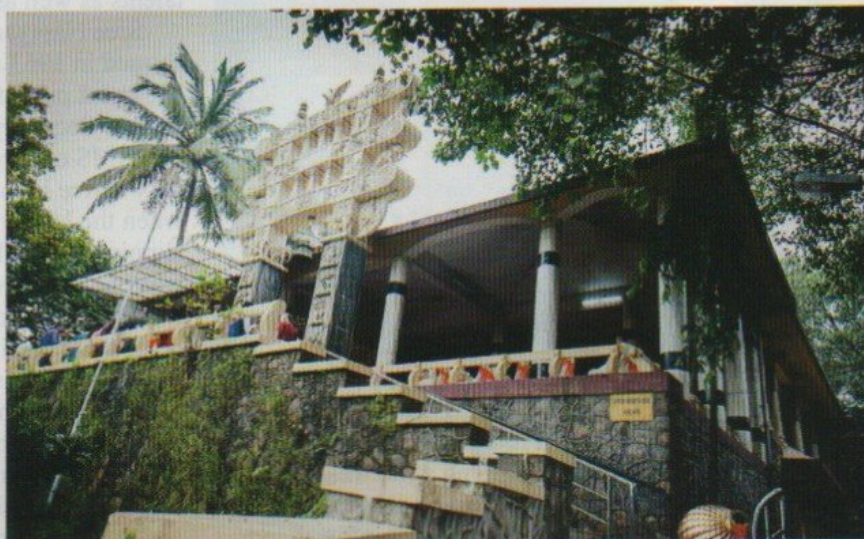
■ **Meditation and prayers can help in resolving many relationship crisis as well yet why is it people looking for happiness more in worldly achievements ?**

Just look at the condition of all those who seek happiness outside – stressed, tensed, worried, dejected and depressed! We must realise that true happiness is within. It is our nature. It is our birth right. Scriptures say we are Ananda swaroopa – abode of infinite happiness. But unfortunately the truth is not known to the majority. Hence they look for happiness outside. Even the happiness we get from the world is only a poor reflection of infinite

happiness within. This we don't know.

■ **How can the social media, TV channels and other media ever help in bringing individual peace and happiness ?**

Our saints and sages of the past have given us everything. They have already given us the path to peace, perfection and prosperity. The role of the media is to give wider publicity to these ancient knowledge traditions.



■ **How important is economic sustenance even for spiritual progress ?**

Both should go hand in hand. We need material prosperity and also spiritual evolution. A hungry man cannot practice spirituality. So too without spirituality, even amidst riches and luxuries one cannot find peace of mind. So both are essential. ■



P R Krishnanunny

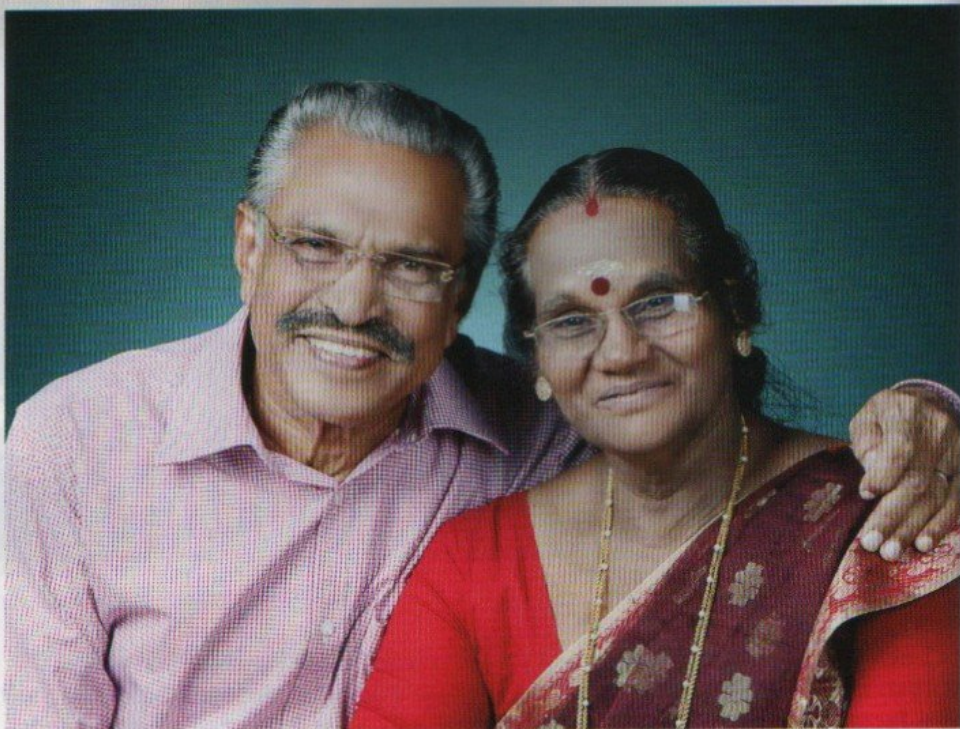
The story is quite different for Malayalam theatre. Those above sixty today may remember the pages of Mathrubhumi weekly displaying scenes or the artistes of the troupe who staged a drama in one school or a library cum reading room in one of the corners of Kerala during the fifties and sixties.

Theatre is an arena always changing its modes. India always cherished its stand on theatre lest Kalidasa and Bhasa would not have ventured into writing plays. Europe is also no different. One may wonder that there are stages in England (why? Even in Kolkata) playing Shakespearean drama to full houses even today. The makeup and costume may have changed but the story and dialogue continue to be the same. Unless one dons a character in one of the innumerable plays written by the grandmaster, one cannot be called to be a stage artiste. Such is the state even today.

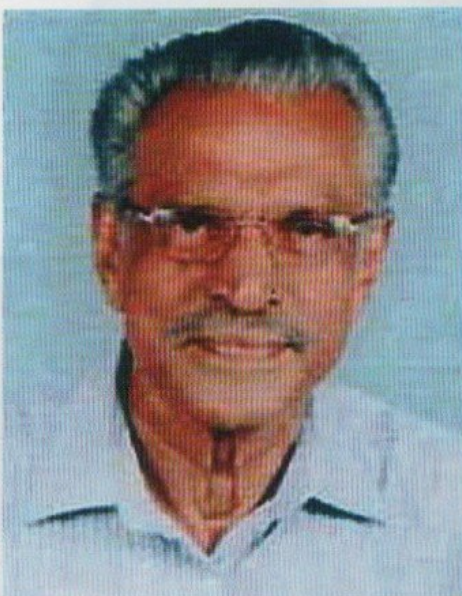
The story is quite different for Malayalam theatre. Those above sixty today may remember the pages of Mathrubhumi weekly displaying scenes or the artistes of the troupe who staged a drama in one school or a library cum reading room in one of the corners of Kerala during the fifties and sixties. Those days are gone but the memory lingers. Yet there are a few people even today in this far away place like Mumbai willing to give their right arm for a chance to present a strong character on the stage for a last opportunity.

Krishnanunny P R is such a personality. People may have forgotten Krishnanunny the stage actor cum director but he is yet to forget those days re-emerging once again.

Krishnanunny was born to Patoor Raman and Janaki in Anthikad made famous by film person Sathyan Anthikad in 1939. During his school and college days in Anthikad High School and Kerala Varma College, he had opportunities to don a few roles in various plays and he thus made a name for himself among his peers as a stage artiste. After obtaining an industrial diploma, he left for Bombay looking for a career in 1960. Before leaving Anthikad he had the opportunity to play



Krishnanunny with wife Lalitha



Krishnanunny

an important role in Nanappan's Kshetram. Obtaining a job was not difficult for him and he chose to stay in Bhandup where he was employed and

slowly got into the social activities in this suburb. There was a cultural body as well as a social group and later they merged to form Bhandup Keraleeya Samajam. Today he is the Secretary of the Samajam. Bhandup turned to be an ideal place to nurture his inherent acting talents as well as professional skills.

Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti was formed in 1963 and Krishnanunny became a part of it since then. He was elected Secretary of the Bhandup Unit of SNMS on three occasions. He was very active in theatre from 1961 to 1976 when the Malayalam theatre started slipping down. The advent of television was one of the reasons while the other was the migration of talented actors to other parts of Mumbai. Besides acting in plays, he was also busy directing many of them. Since his marriage to Lalitha, he got an ideal partner to contribute more to the Mumbai theatre as the city faced an acute shortage of female actors. Lalitha gave her husband ample support

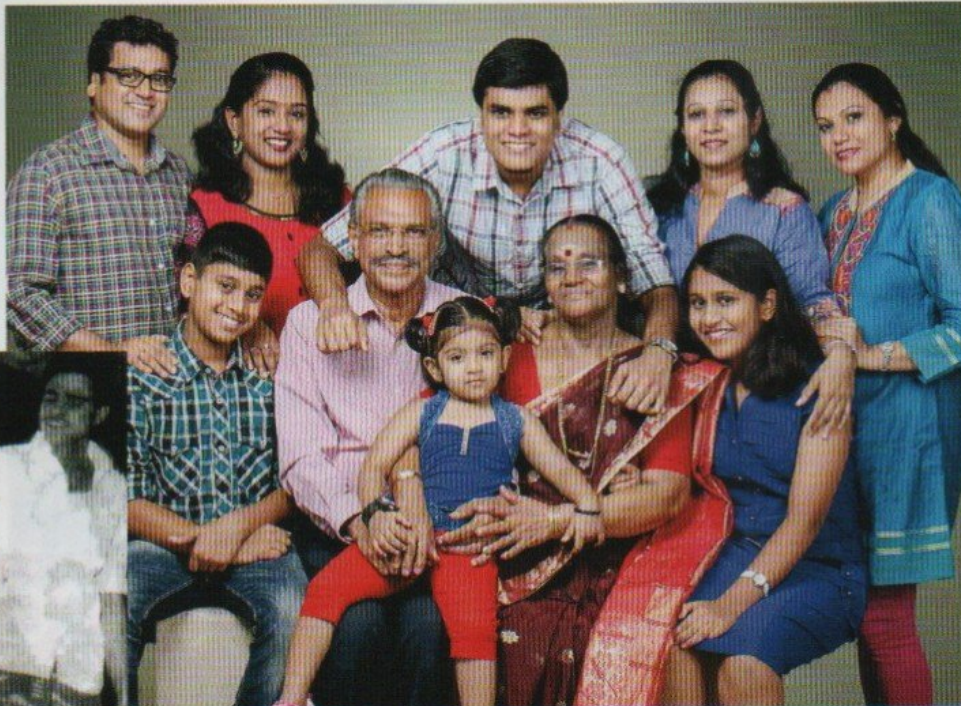
not only at home but also on the stage. Though Bhandup was his regular venue for staging plays, he has also performed at the prestigious Shanmughananda Hall and Podar College since 1972. He was bestowed with the award for the best actor in 1970 during the 17th anniversary of the Bhandup Keraleeya Samajam.

Some of the plays that he staged are

Kshetram,
Nakshtravilakku,
Kaanaljalalam,
Divyabali,
Kutumbadoshikal,
Karhutha
velicham,
Thanneerpanthal,
Samudram,
Thyagam,
Thamasoma,
Akaldama etc.

Most of these plays were also directed by him though the last two mentioned are directed by Ramani.

Krishnanunny is a resident of Little



Krishnanunny with family

Apartment of Miniland in Bhandup along with his wife Lalitha, son Rathish, daughter in law Srilakshmi and granddaughter

Samruddhi. His daughter Srikala Babu is a recognised danseuse and cultural

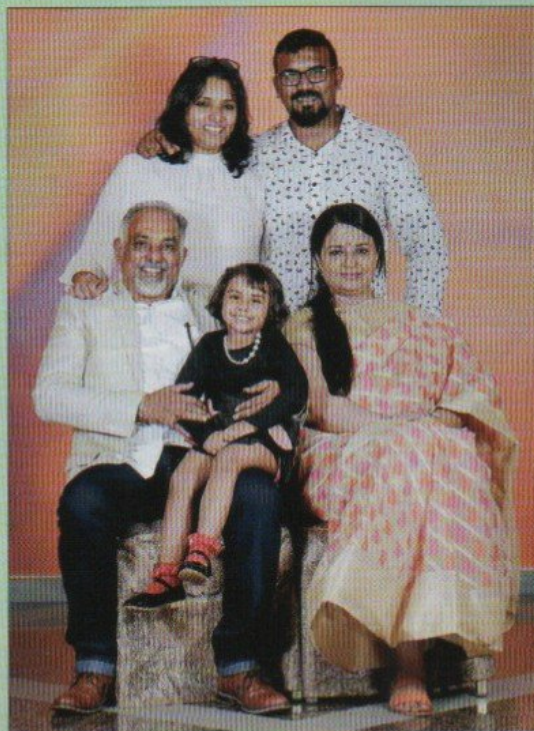
organiser.

Krishnanunny and Lalitha are currently busy in ushering their 54th year of wedded life on May 5, 2018 and we are all looking forward to wish the couple many such events in future. He can be accessed on 99202 63963. ■

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Dr Geeta Madhavan

SAGO PAYASAM

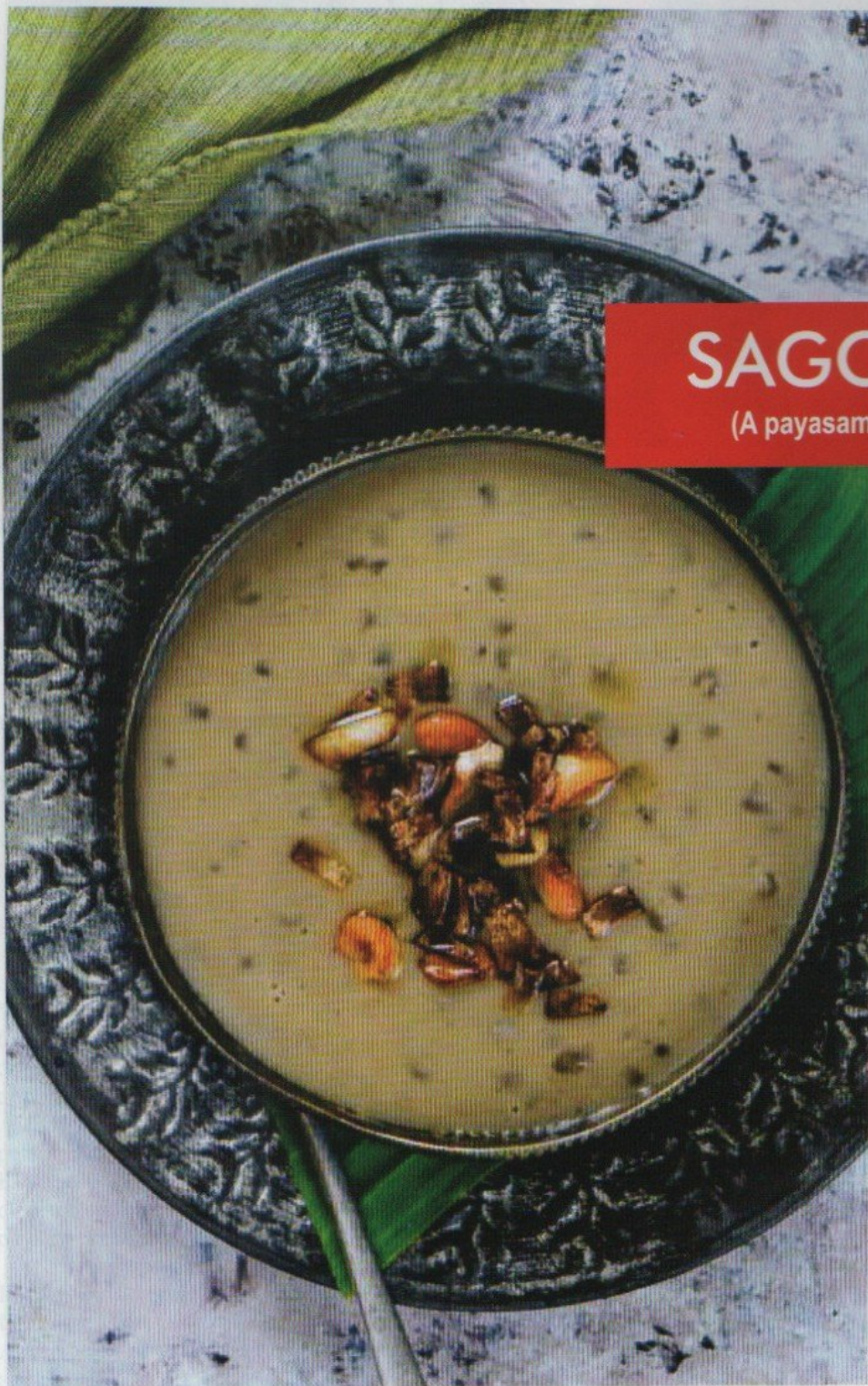
(A payasam with sago in coconut milk)

INGREDIENTS

Sago (Sabudana) 2 tbsp (soaked)
Jaggery ½ cup
Coconut Milk 1 cup
Cardamom powder 1 tsp
Roasted cashew and Almond 2 tsp

METHOD

1. Melt jaggery in 1/2 cup of water, strain it and keep it aside.
2. Wash the sago well to remove all the extra starch
3. Boil 1 cup of water, add sago and cook for 5 minutes till transparent.
4. Add melted jaggery and cook till sago becomes light brown in colour and sweet.
5. Add coconut milk and stir to prevent curdling and put off the flame.
6. Garnish with roasted cashews, almond and cardamom powder.
7. The sago swells later and becomes thick hence maintain thin consistency.



Courtesy: Southern Twist
by Dr. Geeta Madhavan

TIME TO REVISIT THE THEATRE

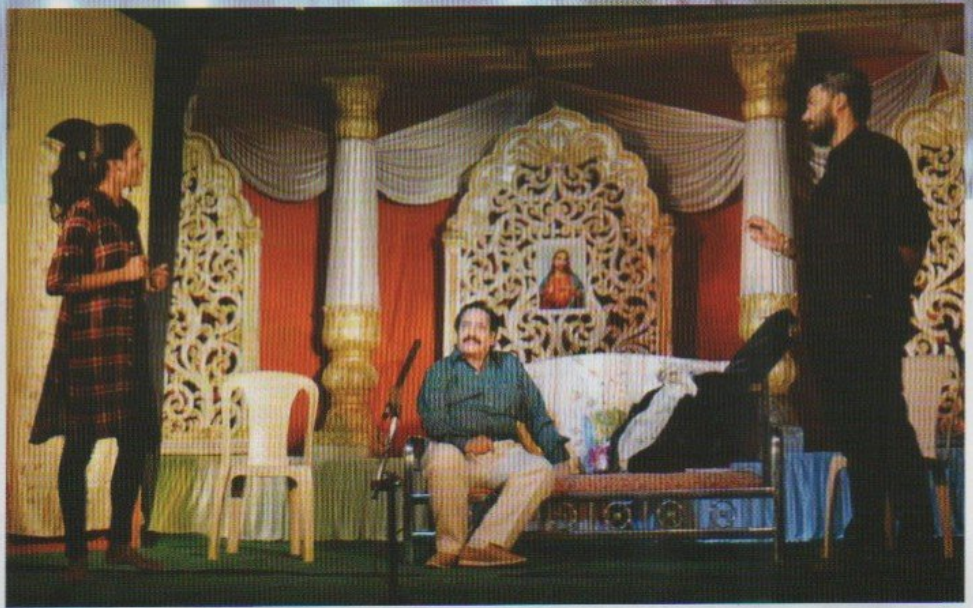
It is very heartening to see the stage plays are getting encouragement and revivalism after so many years especially for Malayalam stage. When Marathi and Gujarati plays are getting good booking at box office, Malayalam stage is waiting for sponsorship and yet half the auditorium gets empty by interval. It is time to contemplate on the reasons for this state of affairs.

After some time, a new Malayalam play has taken centre stage, written by Rajan Thekkummala and directed by Rajendran Padiyoor. For a change when the play was repeated for the second time, the audience was given copies of the play so that they can contemplate and appreciate it more.

The playwright is a veteran as he has a set of collections of short stories, a novelette, a collection of poems and he is currently writing a series of articles in a periodical contiguously and now a play too. A true validation of the old Sanskrit saying, 'Dramatics is the culmination of poetics' is now achieved.

'Ee Punyabhoomi' is a short play of four acts with Maharashtra in the background and the characters are drawn from Kerala and Mumbai while the dramatist takes pot shots at some local luminaries whom the audience can easily identify. There are a highly committed medical practitioner who spends his night in hospital taking care emergency operations and then comes home for a cup of tea but leaves again to the hospital without having tea as he asks his daughter to hand over his cup of tea to a needy visitor. Dr Thomas tells us the charitable work done by the Malayali organisations. In second act, the dramatist introduces us to another flamboyant Malayali industrialist, a filthy rich man never hesitating to do anything to get his wishes fulfilled and also willing to pay any amount to cover up his past misdeeds. In the third act, we are told that Dr Thomas has a daughter who is literally inclined but not inclined to get married to a rich boy chosen by her mother. Later we see the doctor handing over a wedding invitation to Kumar, the villainous character.

In between the scenes we have a few other characters doing the acts assigned to them by the dramatist. We have songs and a dance thrown in to



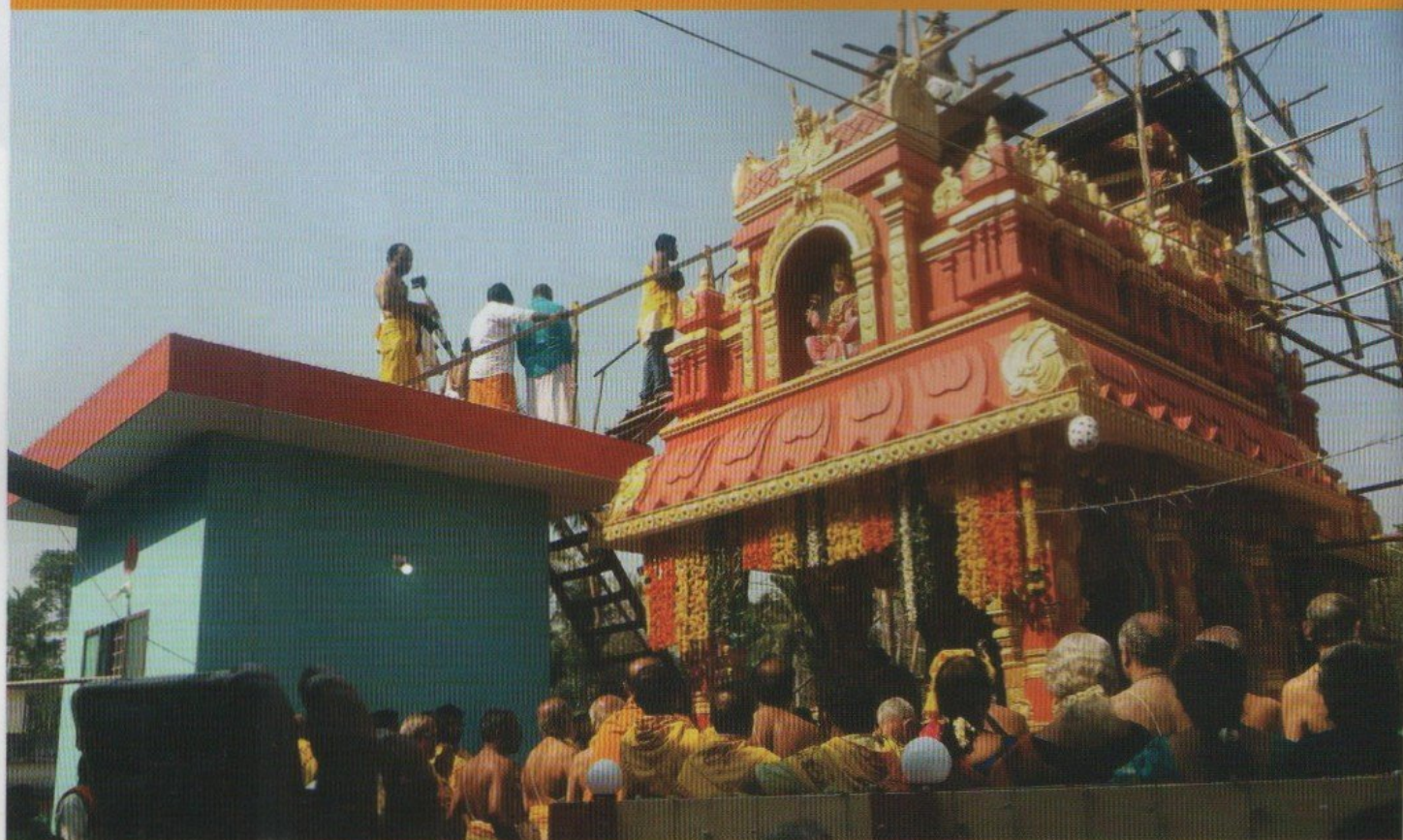
make a complete stage play, as in the past, a social, music and dance drama with some usages of knife and pistols. In short, Ee Punyabhoomi is a satire targeting the so called prominent Malayali leaders.

Rajendran Padiyoor besides directing the play, also acts the heaviest role of Dr Thomas while the other major role of Narendrakumar Seth is presented by Sukumaran. The roles of these important characters, Adv Susan and Jayalakshmi are enacted by Jessy Peter and Raji K Nedyath satisfactorily. The character roles of Krishna Pillai and Fr Christie presented by George Thottathil and Bhaskaran were also adequate.

Other semi important roles of Danny, Stefy, Dhanapal Kurup and Roshan were rightly presented by Sabarish, Surya, Sreejith Pillai and Bijin Kurup respectively. Playwright Rajan Thekkummala appears in a cameo role of Babu and he had done justice to it.

The play, artists and the director cannot ensure the success of the play on the stage. Music, singers, light and acoustics and makeup also play important roles. Venugopal, Gopidas, Shruti and Ashwati contributed their share in good measure while Rajendran Merco, Dr Suseelan and Madhu Champakulam lent their talent unhesitatingly. ■

Kanakadhara Mahalakshmi Temple Becomes A Reality



Kumbhabhishekam at Mahalakshmi Temple

A grand dream of Mumbai Keralites has borne fruit. Since 2001, some of the senior Malayalees were working hard to erect a befitting monument to Kanakadharastavam, the first creation of Jagad Guru Adi Sankara at its original site. Finally their wishes are now fulfilled when the world is celebrating the 1230th Jayanthi of Jagatguru Sankaracharya.

The legend of Kanakadharastavam is known to all followers of Sankara's philosophy. According to the records of Sri Sarada Mathom, Shringeri, it happened in 794 AD when Sankara was barely six years old. He as part of the tradition existing then was on his journey seeking 'bhiksha' and reached a village, now known as Punnorkode, some 18 kms away from his village Kalady and a hapless lady of the house sought his forgiveness for her inability to give him anything worth eating. Sankara sought the intervention of Sri Mahalakshmi, the goddess of prosperity by praising her through 19 Sanskrit quatrains. Mahalakshmi is believed to



Mahalakshmi

have showered golden gooseberries in the courtyard of her house.

Receiving financial and moral support from most part of India, especially from Maharashtra, Tamilnadu, Andhrapradesh, Karnataka and even from abroad, the first two phases are now complete. A massive gopuram of 70 feet long and 35 feet tall housing the Trust office, meditation centre and store rooms was built as first



Ganapati

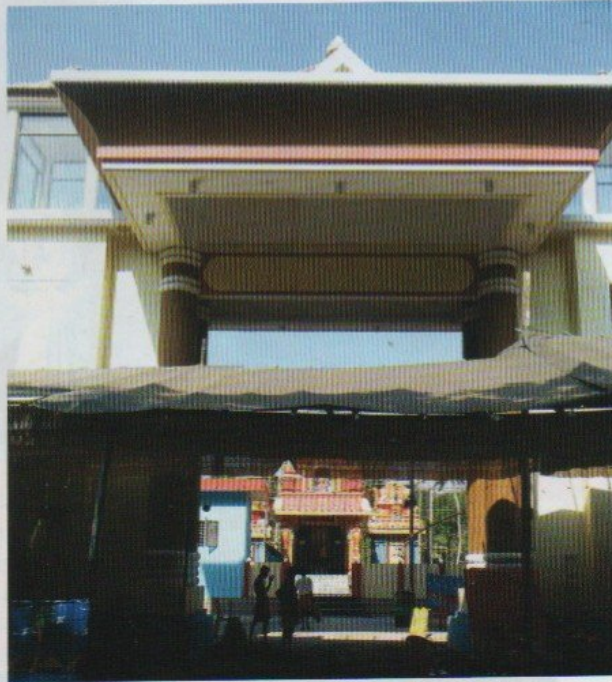


Adi Sankara

phase. The second phase consists of temple for Sri Kanakadhara Mahalakshmi as the main idol and Mahaganapati and Adi Sankara as upadevatas. The consecration ceremony of the idols was held on March 2 and 3 and the Kumbhabhishekam was held on March 4, under the supervision Dr Sheshdri Shastrikal of Kaladi. Dr Shastrikal was the head of Department of Vedic Studies, University Madras and

now retired and stays close to Kalady temple. About 2000 devotees witnessed the ceremonies and paid their tributes to the Goddess. What surprised people who gathered there was the presence of people from other states. Hundreds of people had sent money as part of their offerings.

Two priests Sri Narayana Iyer and Sri B Subramanian from Tamilnadu are now working at the temple. The daily rituals start at 5.30 am till 10 am in the morning and again from 5 pm to 8 pm. Since Adi Sankara gave importance to mantra over Tantra in all his mutts and other temples where he prescribed rituals of worship, the same tradition is being followed here. Most of Malayalees are unaware of this distinction but in all temples in other South India states and North India where normally one finds an idol of Sankaracharya installed and rituals based on mantra(hymns) are followed. In nomenclature, it is called Vaidika tradition. Normal offerings are Shodasha Pushpanjali and Ashtothara



A view of the temple from the road

Vigna Nivaraka pooja for Sri Mahalakshmi, Sri Ganesha and Adi Sankara and these poojas can be sponsored by the devotees as offerings. Special pooja is offered to Sri Mahalakshmi such as Kanakadhara Lakshmi Ashtothara and Udayasthamana Pooja. Mangalya pooja,

Janmanakshtra pooja, also could be offered.

There will be Akshayathritiya pooja on April 18 and the 1230th Sankara Jayanthi will be celebrated in full pomp on April 20. Devotees can send their offerings to Sri Adisankara Kanakadhara Smruti Trust by cheque to be deposited in any Federal Bank Ltd Branch into the SB A/c No. 13120100068197 (IFSC code FDRL0001312 if sent by NEFT /RTGS). For official receipt, the counterfoil of the bank remittance should be forwarded to Secretary of the Trust at 7/5 Blossom, Military Road, Marol, Mumbai 400 059 with full name, postal address, e-mail ID, WhatsApp No. etc. Copy of receipt can be posted to WhatsApp No 9833677968 also.

Third phase of construction will consist of building residential accommodation for visitors and temple officials besides a suitable kitchen and dining hall in the temple premises. Financial support is sought from devotees either as donation or loan with or without interest for this purpose. ■



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Shivanjali Classical Dance Festival

Dr Chitra's organizational skills were very evident and visibly felt during the 5 Year Shivanjali Classical Dance Festival during the years 2014-18, which culminated this year in February with a two day programme.



Sudha Chandran's performance



Guru Dr. Chitra Vishwanathan

Guru Dr. Chitra Vishwanathan is an Artiste 'Choreographer' with nearly three decades experience in imparting various classical dance forms with an exemplary ability in honing and perfecting the skills of hundreds of aspiring dancers with her vast expertise. She is the director of "Abhinayaa Institute of Research and Fine Arts which has been in existence in Vasai since 1991, which runs its branches successfully at Boisar, Nallasopara, Mira Road and Goregaon.

Dr Chitra's organizational skills were very evident and visibly felt during the 5 Year Shivanjali Classical Dance Festival during the years 2014-18, which culminated this year in February with a two day programme. Her's is the only Institute among the Palghar Dist who conducts Classical Dance Festivals. Her

festivals provide a platform to all the talented artists of different styles of Classical Dance. Neither such festivals have any sponsors nor is this aided by the Government. Such festivals are solely managed by Abhinayaa on its own to promote Indian Classical Dance Forms. The first day witnessed a grand ballet performed by students of Abhinayaa Institute in association with Sudha Chandran, namely "Shiva Ganga A Path to Mokhsam", choreographed, directed and conceptualized by Guru Dr Chitra Vishwanathan. It enthralled the audience that evening and claimed wide applause; and the second day too witnessed appreciable performances by artistes from Mumbai and various states of India. The festival witnessed Bharatanatyam performance by Aparna and Rajeshwari Students of Kalakshetra

Foundation Chennai; Mohiniattam performance by disciples of Guru Smt. Geeta Vijayshankar from Mumbai; Kathak performance by disciples of Guru Manali Deo from Mumbai; Bharatanatyam performance by Digjaya and Radhika disciples of Guru Dr Sandhya Purecha, Mumbai; Kathak Performance by Aparna Mane and Shraddha Sirmokadam disciples of Guru Lata Bakalkar; Bharatanatyam performance by Guru Poornima Naveen and her disciples; Bangalore; Kathak performance by Guru Sanchita Lahoti and her disciples from Bangalore; Bharatanatyam performance by Guru Gaurav Vyas and his disciples from Goa; Bharatanatyam performance by Chaitra and Archana from Bangalore disciples of Guru Kalashree Sri Kiran Subramaniyam; Kathak performance by Bishal and Mohini disciples of Guru Anju Bhattacharya from Kolkata; Kathak performance by Akshatha and Yashashwini from Bangalore disciples of Guru Mysore Nagaraj; Sakhi Dancers Shubhangi and Rutuja from Pune; Odissi performance by Guru Sanjaya Kumar Behera and his disciple Silpa Mohanty; Manipuri performance by Guru Sudip Kumar Ghosh from Kolkata; Odissi performance by Soma Chakma from Tripura and Bharatanatyam performance by disciples of Mrs Charmine Lazarus, Nupra Dance Academy, Pune. Shivanjali thus truly came out as a lavish feast for the eyes and ears. She also successfully completed Rangutsav Krishna Ras Classical Dance Festival which was held in Bangalore on 3rd March 2018. The year 2017 also witnessed 4 festivals under Dr Chitra's initiative, Shardanjali A tribute to Rabindranath Tagore at Delhi Habitat Stein Auditorium in July, Banshi Dance Festival, Hyderabad in April-17 Abhinayaa & Gandharbi in collaboration with Shilparamam, 2nd Children's National Dance Festival at Cochin on 14th Nov 2017 and Guru Babu Singh National Dance Festival at Imphal in Aug 2017. Her constant motivation and encouragement has been her husband who is also a well renowned singer in Mumbai P E Vishwanathan and is also the Chairman of Abhinayaa Institute. Dr Chitra's is the sole Institute who teaches and spreads dance with no caste and creed for which she has received a National Award. Below are the few prestigious



Disciples of Dr Chitra perform



Sudha Chandran and Dr Chitra perform with their spouses

awards received by Dr Chitra.

For her service to the cultural arena of India, Dr Chitra has received several awards from topnotch institutions. They are:

- Konark Nritya Ratna Award in International Dance and Music Festival, Cuttack in Jan 2018.
- Savitri Bai Phule National Award in Dec-17 for teaching & spreading dance with no caste or creed.
- Samata Puraskar State Award in May-17.
- Honoured by Kalindi Darpan IN Dec-16 during the Smaran- Ttribute to Kathak Queen Sitara Devi.

• Kayaka Ratna award by Jnana Mandara Trust, Malaysia in Jan-15.

• Great Savitribai Phule State Award in Feb-14 by Lokmat Sakhi Manch at Vasai.

• Women Achiever Award by National Congress Party - Vasai Virar Region.

• "Research Scholar" in Bhaktivedanta Academy, LA, CA, USA in March -2004.

Dr Chitra resides at Vasai Road West and she can be contacted on Mobile: +91 9322918290

Email: alamelu69@gmail.com
Website: www.abhinayaa.in



CHARMING DANSEUSE ADITI

Shivoham Institute of Performing Arts presented the debut Bharata Natyam performance of Aditi Guruprasad at Mysore Association auditorium. The performance was noteworthy for its considerable command over technique and expressional dancing.

Shivoham Institute of Performing Arts is headed by accomplished Bharata natyam exponents Guru Nilesh Singha and Mubina. Functioning for more than a decade, Shivoham has trained several aspirants in the field of Bharata Natyam. Nilesh and Mubina have also performed for several prestigious festivals both in India and abroad and also known for their choreographic work.

Charming dansuese commenced the performance with the traditional invocatory numbers, in praise of the presiding deities of Indian classical dances, followed with other numbers that introduces the audience to the technique of Bharata natyam. After the elaborate Varnam, Aditi won the hearts of the spectators with the rendering of the Meera Bhajan that incorporates the game of dice and the scene of Draupadi. Aditi has a natural flair for "abhinaya" and dramatisation. The pleasant surprise of the evening was the number on Lord Ayyappa which was well appreciated by the audience. Aditi could further refurbish her style, with more concern towards technique and presentation. Aditi concluded with the rhythmic Thillana.

Aditi recieved fine orchestral support from Guru Nilesh and Mubina for nattuvangam, Dr Saumya for commendable vocal



rendering, mridangam by KG Vishwanath' violin by Seshadiri, flute by Krishnan, moorsing by Shivanand and ghatam by

Shankar. A promising dancer indeed. Aditi's grandmother who rendered the vote of thanks, revealed that it was her desire that she should learn Bharata Natyam ,hence was really happy that she has completed her Arangetram successfully. The performance was attended by relatives who had come from Kerala to attend the programme.

By Guru Vijay Shanker



Mrs. Alice Johnson Therattil



Adv Padma Divakaran



Rakhee Sunil

Indian Women Convention & Women Achiever Awards 2018

■ Indian women convention and Women Achievers Awards 2018 were presented on 17th March 2018. Mrs. Alice Johnson Therattil, Ex- Mumbai

Municipal Corporator received the Award for 'Women Achiever for Active Public Service.' Adv Padma Divakaran (Retd. IRS) received award for

extension of support to underprivileged for critical healthcare and Rakhee Sunil received award for supporting women empowerment and child education.

Women's Day at Ulhasnagar

■ Ulhasnagar Arts and Welfare Association held Women's Day on March 18 at Kairali Hall with various cultural programmes. Smt Sheeja Mathew (CEO, Zenith HR & International Standard and Malayalam Mission Council Member, Mumbai) was the Chief Guest.



From the inaugural ceremony of Women's Day



Participants



Audience

P R Krishnan bestowed Janashakti Award

■ Janashakti Arts Dombivli chose Trade Union Leader P R Krishnan as the winner of Janashakti Award for this year. The award was presented by Naresh Birwadkar in Thunchan Smaraka Hall, Dombivli. President of Janashakti Arts John Salve presided over the event. The contributions of Krishnan in labour, political and social fronts enabled him to receive the award.

His book 'Porattavazhiyil Patharhate' (Unwavering along the path of struggles) was also released during the event. Novelist Suresh Kanakkoor presented the first copy of the book to litterateur C P Krishnakumar. K Gopalan Nair, Bala Kurup, Devan Tharapil and Bapu Kaver spoke on the occasion. T K Rajendran welcomed the audience.



Novelist Suresh Kanakkoor presenting the first copy of the book to C P Krishnakumar

Chaitra Navrathra Utsav 2018

■ Anand Charitable Trust, Thane celebrated 'Chaitra Navrathra Utsav 2018' on a grand scale at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Maidan at Thane on 22nd March. As a part of the celebrations they felicitated a few prominent personalities from various fields like cultural, Social, sports, literature and arts by honouring them with Navrathna Puraskar and Navdurga Puraskar for men and women respectively. A few prominent Mumbai Malayalees Lion Kumaran Nair, Rajan V Nair, Advt Prema Menon and Sunil Kumar were the recipients of the awards.



Kumaran Nair and Rajan Nair with their awards



Awardees at the Utsav

Study Workshop of Balagokulam

■ Balagokulam Mumbai is organising a one-day study workshop on April 8 at Kamala Vihar Sports Club, Kandivli for students and parents from 10 am to 4 pm. Former President of Balagokulam of Kerala State C Sreedharan will be attending. For more details contact on 98213 63877.

Zonal meetings started

■ As a part of reorganising the working of the Mumbai Chapter of Malayalam Mission, the zonal meetings have been started. This move is one of the steps adopted to reinvigorate the Malayalam Mission activities. The area comprising Mumbai, Thane, Raigad and Konkan is divided into eight zones.

The first meeting of Raigad-Navi Mumbai Zone was held at Nerul NBKS Hall and the new office bearers were elected. They are Valsan Moorkoth (President), Nisha Prakash (Secretary), Satish Nair (Treasurer). Co-ordinators were also elected. P Balakrishnan (Airoli to Seawoods), Vinodkumar (CBD to Uran) and Bankin P John (Mahad to Nagathaone) are the co-ordinators. There is also a Working Committee comprising of 49 people.

Zonal Committee for Colaba-Mankhurd Zone will be held on April 7 at 3 pm in Adarsh Vidyalaya, Chembur. Patrons of Malayalam Mission, teachers and supporters interested in conducting classes will participate. Contact numbers: 99204 42272, 95947 93248 and 99698 35989.

Mumbra-Badlapur Zone meeting will be held on April 8 at 10 am in Model School, Kolsawadi, Kalyan East.



Adv. Padma Divakaran was felicitated by Soman, Zonal Secretary of SNMS, Miraroad unit as a part of their women's day celebration. Jayadharan, Valsachandran, Suma Rajan, Sandhya Sadanandan, Ammini Ramachandran and Nimi Jayadharan spoke on the occasion.

Book distribution from library of Trombay Fine Arts Club

■ Distribution of books donated by Malayalam Mission to Trombay Fine Arts Club was inaugurated by Kanakkoor R Sureshkumar. President Muralidharan Nannatt, Dr A Venugopal, M P Rathish, R Pradeep, Sudha R

Chandran, Jose Pichappillil, S Ajaykumar and teachers attended the function. V T Gopalakrishnan Memorial Awardee Sureshkumar was felicitated during the event.

AIMA Meet for Women Wing

■ In order to take the women forward in the fields of arts, culture and social affairs, AIMA has decided to invigorate the activities of women from the 28 states of India. Self employment schemes for women, counselling centres for women and children, mercy mission activities, environment protection etc will be given an impetus. Action on formation of women wing in states is continuing, according to Adv Prema Menon, National Chairperson of AIMA Women Wing. Rakhi Sunil has been named as the convenor of the women's Wing in Maharashtra.



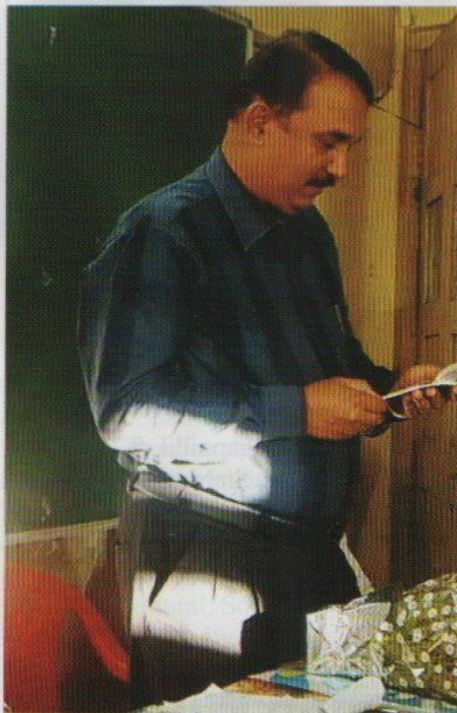
Adv Prema Menon



Rakhi Sunil

Aksharakalari

■ Mulund Kerala Samajam has formed an art, cultural and literary body by name 'Aksharakalari' and it was inaugurated by well known journalist N Sreejith at Mulund Vidyamandir School. Samajam president C K K Poduval presided over the event. General Secretary E Ramachandran welcomed the audience. Noted social, literary and cultural leaders from Mumbai participated in the event. Convenor K G Somakumar proposed a vote of thanks.



N Sreejith during the inauguration



Participants at Aksharakalari

Devika recognised in Tokyo

■ Devika Azhakesan from Mumbai has found recognition in a music competition held in Tokyo. Eight artists selected from various nations of Asia were chosen to be recognised at the Gatesby Creative Awards. Earlier each contestant had to write the lyric, score music for it and then render it at the competition. Though Devika failed when eight contestants took part in the contest on March 10, Gatesby decided to honour all of them.

Devika, a first year engineering student rendered an English song.



Devika Azhakesan

Cancer sensitisation seminar by SNMS

■ Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti organised a seminar to sensitise the people about the disease Cancer on March 25. The subject was 'Cancer and Society' and the venue was Samiti's

Chembur Complex. Dr Shailesh Srikante of Tata Memorial Hospital was the main speaker. Besides him, Dr Shalakra Joshi, Dr Vikram Chaudhary, Dr Shweta Rai, Dr Manish Bhandare of

Tata Memorial held classes on breast cancer, liver Cancer, ovarian cancer and prevention respectively.



Section of audience



Dr Shailesh Srikante inaugurating the seminar

Shweta Warriier leads the way



Shweta Warriier

■ On her 18th birth day Shweta Warriier set an example for others by donating her rich hair to the patients of Cancer. Hair Bank Miracle Charitable Association of Thrissur was instrumental for her charitable act. This association provides hair wig to the recuperating patients of cancer free of cost. Similar to blood bank, the association collects hair from social conscious people and make wigs for patients.

Shweta shares her birthday with International Women's Day. Shweta has performed and won over 30 state awards for her dance performances besides presenting western style dances as well. She had 11 awards in this category. She has also acted as heroine in a film purported to instil confidence among cancer patients. It was during the plus two examinations, she found time to donate her hair to the needy.

People wishing to emulate Shweta can contact Hair Bank Miracle Charitable Association on 9847098237 (Thrissur), or Tru Indian (9320986322 Mumbai).



Pinnaltheeruvathira by Goregaon Malayalee Samajam, Ladies Wing at Guruvayoor Temple



Participants of Pinnaltheeruvathira: Meera Kutty, Sulochana Karunakaran, Uma Babu, Renu Jayan, Thulasi Ramdas, Ambili Kumar, Anila Gopi, Kavya Nair, Ankita Nair, Bindu Ravi, Smitha Prathapan and Mukta Vishwambaran



Upendra Menon Lighting the lamp for National Badminton Championship at Nasik. All India Malayalee Association (AIMA) Western Zone had organised the tournament.

Re-consecration of SNMS Tarapore Guru Centre

■ Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti Tarapore Unit conducted its re-consecration. The procession carrying the new idol and the consecration ceremony witnessed participation of hundreds of people. The ceremonies were conducted under the supervision of Swami Bodhitheertha of Sivagiri Mutt. General Secretary N S Salimkumar presided over the general meeting. Zonal secretaries M K Soman, K Gopidas, Pushpa Marbarose, A K Venugopal, unit secretary T S Thankachan, Adv Padma Divakaran et al addressed the gathering. Swami Bodhitheertha conducted a discourse. It was followed by cultural events and community feast.



Swami Bodhitheertha addresses the gathering



Procession before consecration

A new drama by Tarapur Samajam

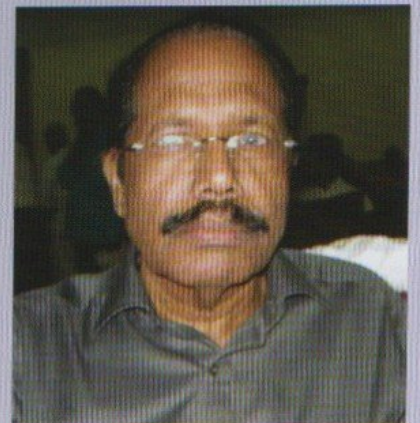
■ When Malayalam Bhasha Pracharana Samiti conducted the Vasai-Virar Zonal Malayalam Festival in BKS Grounds of Vasai, Tarapur Malayali Samajam presented a short drama 'Ivar Jeevanulla Daivangal' (These living gods) a refreshing one from routine. The theme of the play was based on the senior citizens abandoned in old age homes by their loved ones such as daughters and sons. Deviating from the general practice of coming to the stage from the

green room, the characters came through the audience and also left through the same route. The drama was a visual presentation of the poem written by Satish Cherthala. Around forty children and their parents from the Tarapur Samajam participated in the play. BKS President P V K Nambiar inaugurated the library of Malayalam Mission and Mohankumar and Harikumar addressed the audience.

Half Yearly Meet of KKS

■ The half yearly meet of Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana (KKS) will be held on April 25 at Pioneer School Hall, Matunga. The elected and nominated members from the affiliated associations are requested to attend the meeting.

EIS Tilakan to receive Sriman Award



■ Litterateur and journalist late K S Menon (Sreeman) Memorial Award instituted by Pravasi Sabdam will be bestowed on EIS Tilakan. The award consists of a purse of Rs.25000 and citation. Tilakan, a resident of Bhandup is leading a retired life. Tilakan was serving the society for the last half a century in the field of literature. The award will be presented to him by litterateur Anand Neelakantan on April 8 at National Institute of Naturopathy Hall where Pravasi Sabdam is holding a literary meet.

Malayalam Kalotsavam

■ East Kalyan Kerala Samajam organised a Malayalam Kalotsavam in which students of Malayalam Class participated. Ananya Prashant, Nikhilraj and Sneha Menon were respectively earned Kalathilakam, Kalapratibha and Yuvapratibha titles.

Singer, actor and music director Premkumar was the Chief Guest at the concluding session. M C Velayudhan, Rajan Panicker, Shabu Cherian, C P Babu, V J Raju, Chacko Thomas, Roy Kottaram, P K Jayaraj, Premlal et al were present. Young actress Nimisha Nair was felicitated.

Malayalam Mission Library of the Samajam was inaugurated on the occasion. Meritorious students were felicitated and winners of online quiz contest were given prizes.

Women's Day celebrations

■ The Women's wing of Malayali Samajam of Manasarovar-Kamothe celebrated Women's Day. It was inaugurated by Asha Bhagat.

Dr Sneha Sunil conducted a class on breast cancer to sensitise the participants about the perils and effects of the disease. About one hundred women participated in the class. Office bearers Leena Premanandan, Joshini Manoharan, Smita Santhosh et al provided the leadership. Members of Kudumbashree group presented various items such as snacks, pickles, fried items, chilli powder, turmeric powder, coriander power etc prepared by them, which were available for purchase. There was a community feast also.

Food Fair at Tarapur

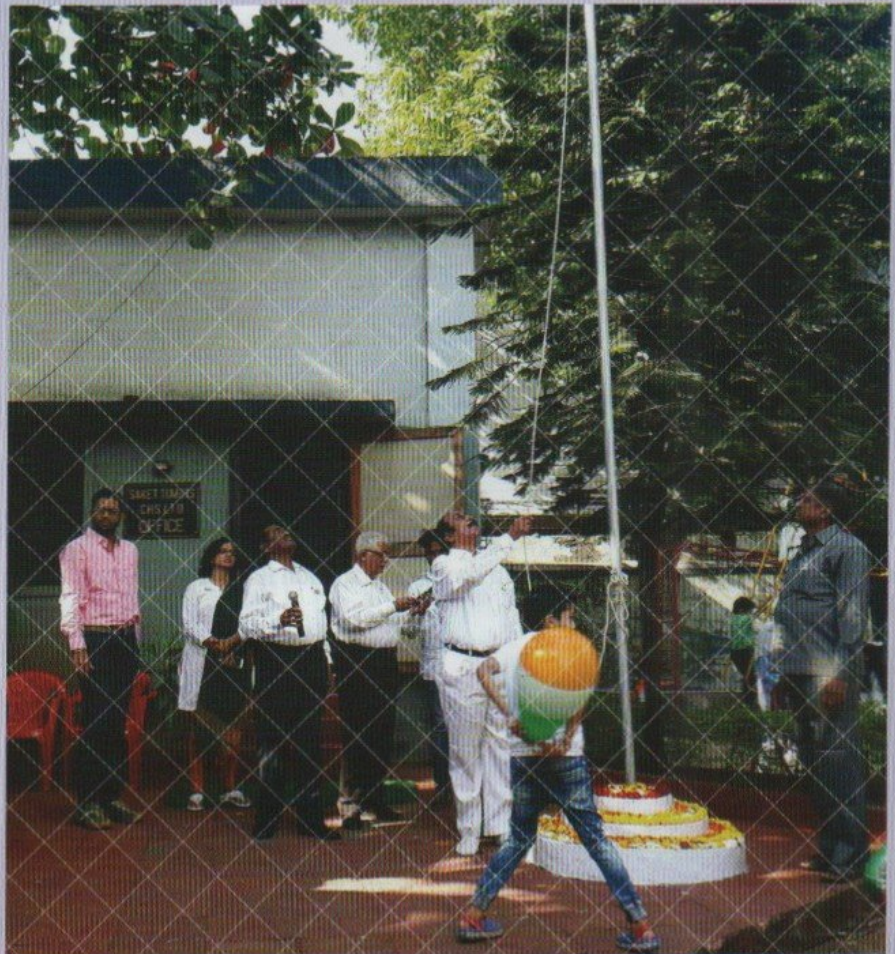
■ Tarapur Malayali Samajam is holding a Food Fair on April 13 from 6 pm onwards at Tima Grounds. There will be cultural Fair also by members of the Samajam and Kottayam Cine Arts. For details, contact 94226 61534.

21st Annual day

■ Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam of Mumbai-Thane unit (3854) will celebrate its 21st anniversary at Shanmughananda Auditorium, Matunga on April 08 from 5.30 pm onwards.

Veteran actor Madhu will be the Chief Guest. Actors Jagadish and Kerala PSC Chairman Adv M K Zakir will be guests of honour. Oscar Award winner Rasul Pookutty, best actress award winner Surabhi Lakshmi, Manoj K Jayan, Director of the fastest movie

ever made Vishwaguru, Vigish Mani, screenplay writer Pramod Payyannur et al will be felicitated during the event. Well known Hindustani-Carnatic musician cum music director Pandit Ramesh Narayanan, best female singer Madhushri Narayan, Kala Gurukulam troupe of Kannur, comedian Nelson, Kalabhavan Sudhi, Kalabhavan Leena Lakshmi, Dileep Kottayam et al will present their items. Ashish Abraham and Yatindran Master will be the presenter.



Flag hoisting by Chairman Upendra Menon at Saket Towers, Thane on Republic Day

Felicitated

■ Members selected from Mumbai to Loka Kerala Sabha were accorded a reception by Bombay Kerala Muslim Jama-at. Kumaran Nair, Prince Vaidyan, Mathew Thomas, P D Jayaprakash, V A Khader Hajee, Adv Prema Menon and Bindu Jayan were present at the reception.

MMK Urumi inaugurated the event. Special invitees to the Sabha Bhupesh Babu and C M Abdul Khader were also honoured. Manikoth Mahmood Hajee presided. T V K Abdulla, Imbichi Moideen, T A Khaleed, Aziz Maniyoore, and C H Abdurahman spoke on the occasion.

GST Seminar at New Bombay

■ New Bombay Keraleeya Samajam organised a seminar on GST, 'GST Sadhyathakalum pratibandhangalum' (GST-Possibilities and obstacles). GST and Central Excise Commissioner Dr K N Raghavan was the chief guest. Asst Commissioner Sandeep Gunjal also participated. After addressing the audience, both of them clarified the doubts of the audience in great detail. Dr Raghavan emphasised on the importance of close coordination between the officials and the GST remitters for the success of the scheme. President of the Samajam S Kumar presided. Anil Prakash and Varghese George also spoke on the occasion.

Legal Seminar of KKS

■ Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana held a legal seminar in collaboration with Maharashtra Legal Services Society at CRMS Office Hall, opposite Matunga Central Platform on March 24.

Kharghar hosts World Drama Day

■ As in the past, Kharghar Kerala Samajam celebrated World Drama Day this year also, on March 24 at ITM College Hall of Sector 4. The youth and women Wings of the Samajam presented skits and there would be short plays by Seawoods Malayali Samajam and *Nattupacha*. Besides talks on World Drama Day, there was presentation of old drama songs and excerpts of scenes during the event.

Kairali Cultural Association

■ Kairali Cultural Association, Vrindavan Society, Thane in association with Dr Rajakrishnan's Dental Clinic conducted a free dental check up camp on March 25. This camp was a part of their Silver Jubilee celebrations.



Upendra Menon lighting Inaugural lamp during Installation function of Giants group of Thane city.

Sahasra Kalasabhishekam at Nigadi

■ Nigadi Sri Krishna Temple, one of the important temples of Maharashtra, is organising a Sahasrakalasabhishekam on the annual celebration day from April 8 to April 21. The first day will witness Acharyavaranam, deeparadhana, prasadashuddhi, Ashtakalasa pooja, Vaastukalasa pooja, vaasthu homam, vaasthukalasabhishekam, punyaham, Bhagavati Seva, Athazha pooja etc. There will be special pooja till April 12. On April 14 Tantri Azhakathu Sasthrusharman Namboothiripad will hoist the flag. Vishukani will be on April 15 morning. Konniyoor Shailajakumar will conduct Bhagavatham recitation from April 14 to April 21 from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm on daily basis.

There will be special pooja and annadanam everyday. On 20th

evening, there will be *pallivetta* and next day *Aarattu* procession accompanied by folk arts and *panchavadyam* will take place. After *Aarattu*, flag will be lowered.

Everyday after 8 pm from April 13 to 21, there will be cultural events such as Lavani, Kapila dance, dance programmes by Kapila dance Academy, dance drama Guruvayurappan, and music nite by Swaramanjari Orchestra. April 17 will witness dance programmes by Pimpri Chinchwad NSS and sopana sangeetam by Eloor Biju. Mattannur Sankarankutty and troupe will present Triple Thayambaka on April 18, and on April 19 Chalakudi Super Kings will present mega show of mimicry. April 20 and 21 will see dance shows and music programmes.



Felicitation of Dr. Hema Menon - Crystal hospital, Borivali and Sibiya Nadar by Borivali Malayalee Association's ladies wing

MCS Family meet concluded

■ Members of the five zones under the Malayali Cultural Society (MCS) of Chikli concluded their meet in their zones. These meets discussed the affairs of the administrative councils, sub committees and the various activities undertaken in great details. Decision was also taken to acquire the adjacent land with building to expand the activities of the Society.

The meetings were held in Dreams Park Housing Society of Chikli Morevasti, MCS Bhavan, Saideep Apartments of Purna Nagar, Rugmini

Kalyana Mandapam Auditorium of Nigadi Sri Krishna Temple and Devankanam in Spain Road respectively.

President A B Ajaykumar presided. Gen Secretary T V Maheshkumar detailed the activities. Zonal representatives K N S Panicker, Murali R Nair, Vice President P Krishnan Nambiar, Treasurer G C P Chandukutty, Joint Treasurer K K Ajitkumar, Jt Secretary K P Ravindran et al participated.

Painkuni Uthram

■ Hadapsar Ayyappan Devi Temple is celebrating the birthday of Ayyappan i.e. Uthram of Month Meenam, on March 30 with special poojas. The event starts at 6 am with Ganapati Homam, Ashtabhishekam, etc. Bhagavatam recitation will be held from 7 am to 6 pm. Prasadam distribution will be held after distributing it to the nearby orphanage.

Evening programme starts from 7 pm onwards with deeparadhana, bhajans, athazhapooja, Harivarasanam and prasadam distribution.

Obituary



TV Ramachandran

T.V. Ramachandra Warriar (82) of Thichur Warriam passed away in Mumbai. Wife: Malathi Warriar (Ayyappankavu Warriam, Chathanur). Children: Rajesh (Australia), Sandeep (Mumbai). He was Vice President, Varier Samajam Mumbai for 8 years, President Warriar Samajam Mumbai for 4 years. President: World Confederation of Warriars till date.



Free dental check-up camp organized in association with Raj Krishnan's Dental Clinic on 25th March 2018 as a part of the silver jubilee celebration of Kairali Cultural Association.

Annaul Day of Sakinaka Mandira Samiti

■ Sakinaka unit of Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti celebrated its Annual Day as well as the Consecration Day of Gurusri Maheshwara Temple under the supervision of Tantri Vijayakrishnan. The grand procession carrying the portrait of Sri Narayana Guru on a chariot travelled through Lakshminarayan Mandir, Saibaba Mandir, Pipeline, Khairani Road, Jose Nagar, Alpanakkavu Ayyappa Temple and reached the temple around 10 pm. Hundreds of people participated in the procession and the pooja rituals.

In the meeting held in connection with the Annual Day, Samiti President N Sasidharan presided. Somanath Sangale was the Chief Guest. Managing Director of Seagul Group of Companies Dr Sureshkumar Madhusoodanan, N S Salimkumar, Shaji Karthikeyan, M S Raju, Asok, Sunil Narayan et al addressed the meeting. Nimisha Suresh, Mridulkrishna Madhu, Alisha Ravindran, Shreyas Sunilkumar and Meera Krishnankutty received merit awards.



President N Sasidharan addressing the meeting



Cultural programme



Know it all - Interschool quiz competition organised by the Rotaract Club of Borivali Heights.



Kozhikode Kerala's Treasure



C K Subramanian

■ Spice root gave a good account of Kozhikode (called Calicut) about the importance of the place in Indian History. From Vasco da Gama days to the present day set up,

the place is considered a business spot for years. As I belong to the Thali area of Kozhikode I followed the development of the place from my younger days. As a Bank officer I was working in Quilandy branch and was able to visit the Kappad beach, through which Vasco da Gama entered India. When I was watching Surabhi programme of Siddharth Kak through Doordarshan, I came to know that Hooka manufactured at Quilandy was exported to Persia and other countries. Whenever I return from Kozhikode I used to buy the Aluwa (Halva) (Sweet) specially made in different colours for my children. Now Kozhikode Railway Station is a model Railway Station of the Southern Railways. There are many facets of the place in the northern part of Kerala and if you want a quiet holiday and somewhere you can unwind and get away from the stress of metropolitan life then Kozhikode is the ideal place. It is a place of the erstwhile

capital of the Zamorin Kings of Yore. Calicut as the old name suggests is literally meaning a cockerel crowing, is a city of contrasts.

A city that showcases wide-open spaces and lush, green countryside as well as narrow, tightly wound streets that teem with activities. This is not only Kerala's commercial hub and centre for its timber industry but also the home of Ayurveda—an ancient system of medicine that operates in tune with nature. In fact about 50 kilometres from Kozhikode lie the largest herbal gardens in the world. Kerala's verdant forests have, for long years, nourished a profusion of herbs, plants and trees that extremely valuable in the preparation of Ayurvedic medicines. Not surprising

their competence in all the eight branches of Ayurveda. If you are looking for the bright city lights then Kozhikode is not really your kind of the place. On the other hand, if you want a quiet holiday and somewhere you want to unwind and get away from the stress of metropolitan life then this is the ideal getaway and there is no doubt about it. There is the sea, rather quiet beach and a few good museums like the Pazhassiraja Museum and the Krishna Menon Museum whose exhibits include an excellent selection of paintings as also wood and ivory carvings. A large number of the population here is Muslim and in Kuttichira possibly the oldest quarter in the city you can hear the muezzin call the faithful to prayer.

Visit the Muccunti Mosque and discover some interesting facets in history of the Zamorins of Kozhikode and their patronage of Islam in Kerala. Better still, see the Mananchira Maidan and the Manachira tank. Once the bathing area of the Zamorin Kings, it stands amidst the hustle and bustle of the city. The musical fountain the Maidan is a local favourite.

Kozhikode is a city that

exudes all our expectations.

Late VR Krishna Iyer, Supreme Court Judge belonged to this place as he hails from Quilandy a small town near Kozhikode (Calicut).



Mananchira Maidan

therefore, that the ancient tradition of Ayurveda has been kept alive in this State by master Vaidya. The Chief Vaidyas belonged to just eight families and were called Ashta Vaidyas due to

J C Daniel Award to Sreekumaran Thampi

■ The J C Daniel Award instituted by the Government of Kerala has been bestowed on lyricist, story writer, producer, director, music director Sreekumaran Thampi for the year 2018. This award is given to the person whose wholesome contribution to Malayalam Films is considered immense. The award consists of a purse of Rs.5 lakh and it is the highest award instituted by the government for movies. The award will be handed over to him in Kollam when the movie awards for the year are presented.

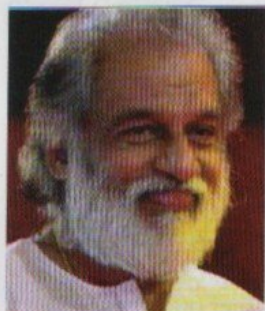
Thampi is in Malayalam movies for the last fifty years. He directed about 30 films and produced about 22 films.

He has been presented with the awards for the best lyricist in 1971 and



2011. His book 'Cinema: Kanhakkum Kavithayum' received the national award for the best book on movies. The film 'Ganam' directed by him earned the award for the most popular film with cultural ethos in 1981. In 2015 he received award for the lyricist of stage plays from Kerala Sangeeta Nataka Akademi.

Thampi expressed happiness for being chosen for the award now though belatedly. It is his 51st year in movies. He has done exorbitant service to the film industry but those who had not done even 50% of his contribution were bestowed with this award much earlier. He thanked the LDF government for selecting him for the award. Earlier governments overlooked him, he stated.



Yesudas to receive Sankarapadmam Award

■ The award instituted by Pazhayanadakkavu Thekke Mathom will

go to Singer K J Yesudas this year. The award consists of a purse of Rs.11,111 and it would be presented to him on

April 2 in Thekke Mathom Lakshmi Mandapam by Mooppil Swamiyar Vasudevananda Brahmanandabhoothi. Writer C Radhakrishnan will be the Chief Guest. Yesudas will inaugurate the celebrations in connection with the Sankara Jayanti.

Ramasramam Award to Sreenivasan



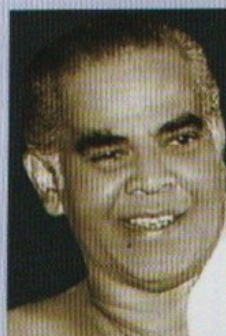
■ The Ramasramam-Unneerikuttu Award instituted by Ramasramam Trust of Kozhikode is going to actor Sreenivasan this year. The award consists of a purse of Rs.50,000 and citation. According to M Mukundan, President of the trust and the convenor of the selection committee, Sreenivasan was chosen for his contribution for bringing great changes in Malayalam movie world. He interpreted the stories of ordinary people by mixing them with humour. Sreenivasan also strongly intervened in social issues. He not only educated people against use of poisonous pesticides but became a role model in not using them, Mukundan pointed out.

Adoor Bhasi's rare collection faces extinction

■ The rare collection of awards and souvenirs and rare photos on exhibition at the museum established by the district panchayat at the site donated by the relatives of departed actor Adoor Bhasi is now facing extinction due to neglect. The museum is situated at his Peringanad Kottackat House. It was opened on August 3, 2010. Since then no film personality has visited this museum. The awards and other honours he received during the three and a half decade of career and kept at various places were then collected and kept here. One photograph in particular deserves a close look as it shows the rare occasion of the meet of the Malayalam film artistes during the Indo-China

War of 1961. It is placed at the entrance but nobody bothered to have a glance at it.

Adoor Bhasi died on March 29, 1990 and then there were a outcry to establish a suitable monument for him. His relatives parted with a piece of land from Bhasi's compound and the Panchayat built the museum in two decades' time. The condition of the museum is pathetic, covered all over by dust, and no so-called art lover bothered to have a look at them, laments Sasikumar, nephew of Adoor Bhasi.



Guruvayur Devaswam budget presented Changad

■ The budget of the 2018-'19 financial year of Guruvayur Devaswom was presented showing an income of Rs 444.6 crore and expense of 437.58 crore, leaving an excess of Rs.10.48 crore.

A provision of Rs.50 crore has been set aside to take over additional land of 100 metre around the temple considering the crowd. Dormitories for the devotees will be built to facilitate cheaper accommodation. There will be comfort stations and clock rooms at a cost of Rs 2 crore. Toilets will be built on all four sides of the temple. To ease the difficulty of the devotee while standing in queue, queue complex will be built at a cost of Rs 2 crore. The Goshala of Vengat will be shifted to Thrissur district. Plant to treat waste generated, shopping complex and completion of Panchajanyam complex are the other projects to be taken up at a



total cost of about Rs 20 crore. Other plans are promotion of Krishnanattam,

Studies of wall painting, Vadya Vidyalayam et al.

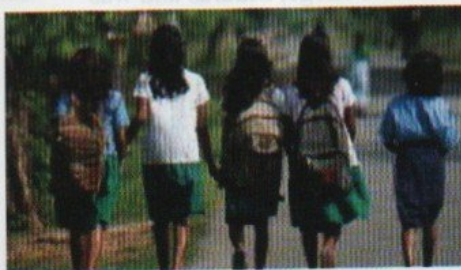
1.25 lakh students in Kerala skip caste, religion columns

■ The education minister of Kerala said that from standard I to X, as many as 1,23,630 students had opted to leave the two columns blank, while as many as 278 students of standard XI and 239 of standard XII had left the two columns blank while taking admission to schools.

Kerala Education Minister C Raveendranath has informed the State Assembly that 1.25 lakh students in the state did not mention their religion in the forms filled during school admission.

The minister was responding to a written query from CPI (M) legislator D K Murali, who had enquired how many students from standards I to XII had obtained admission without filling the columns for religion and caste. In the reply submitted on March 26, the education minister said that from standard I to X, as many as 1,23,630 students had opted to leave the two columns blank, while as many as 278 students of standard XI and 239 of standard XII had left the two columns blank while taking admission to schools. He also said that none of the students in the vocational higher secondary schools had left these columns blank.

This trend shows that the students in



Kerala are much ahead of their political leaders who are doing everything possible to make the religion and caste groups stronger to form electoral banks. Probably this could be their idea of getting rid of religion and caste from the state thereby slowly the reservation system could be abandoned.

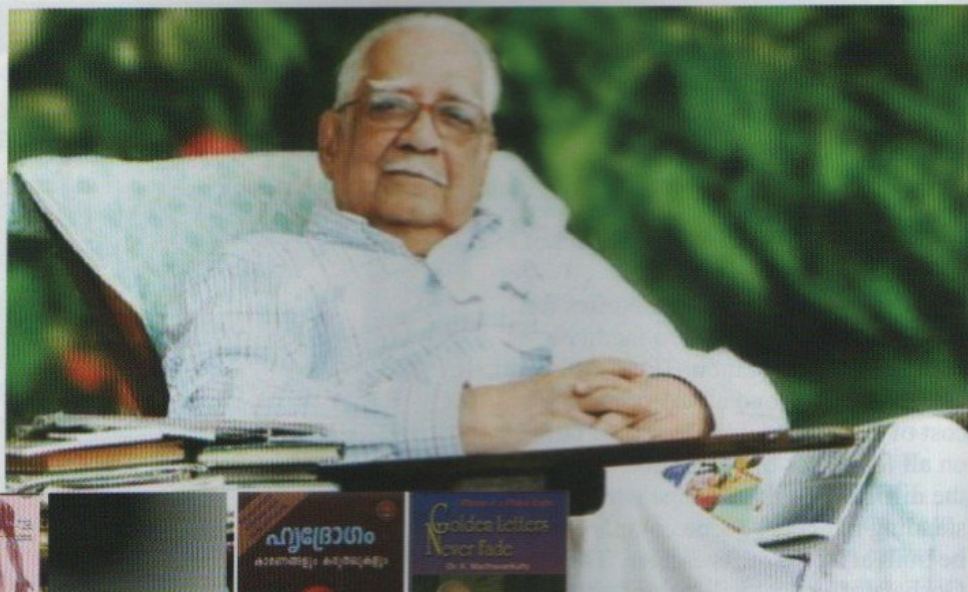
Wishing You All Very Happy
VISHU



Sunil Kumar & Family, Sion

Dr K Madhavankutty is dead

■ Freedom fighter Dr K Madhavankutty who held the post of Principal of four government medical colleges in Kerala died in Kozhikode. He was 93. He was a writer and also was known to have keen interest in Aksharasloka and painting. He held the post of principal of Calicut Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, Thrissur Medical College and Alapuzha Medical College during his career. He was also president of Bharateeya Vichara Kendram for 30 years. He contested election twice but



College in 1974. He retired from the post of Principal of Thiruvananthapuram Medical College in 1981. After

was defeated on both occasions. Later in life he used to say that it was the biggest blunder he ever committed.

He was elected President of Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad twice. He took keen interest in its periodicals. He was member of IMM Board of Kozhikode and Chairman of Kozhikode Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. He was office bearer of several medical boards, publications,

environment bodies etc.

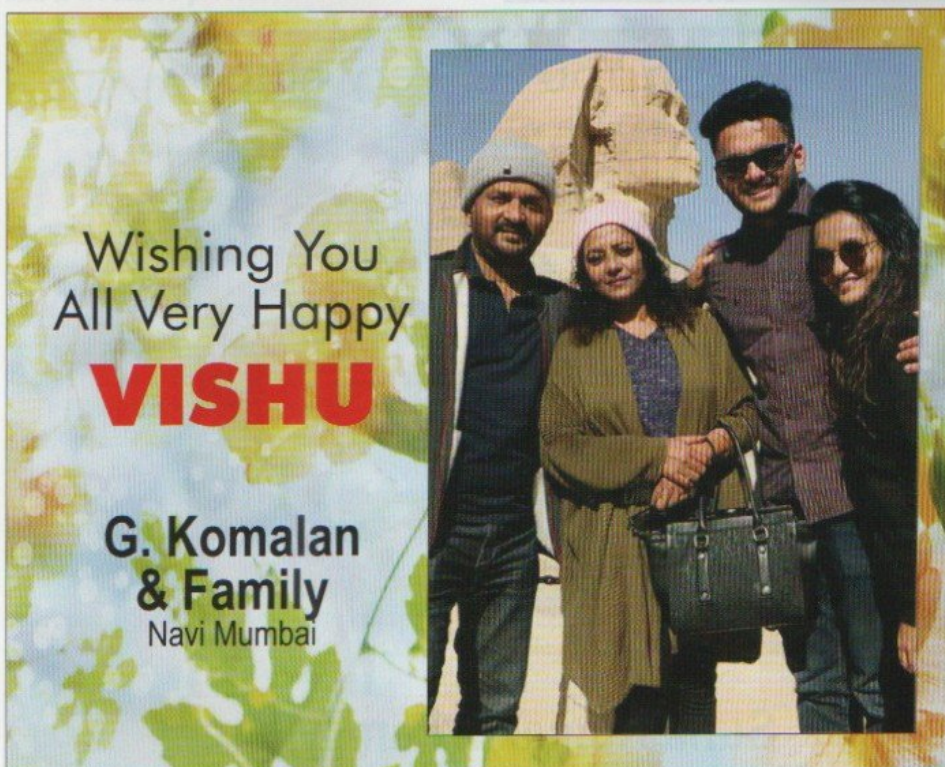
He passed MBBS from Stanley Medical College, Madras and was appointed there as tutor in department of Physiology. Then he joined government service in 1950. When Medical College was started in Calicut, he was appointed there as professor. He had his higher studies in USA. He became Principal of Calicut Medical

retirement he was appointed as Special Officer and Principal of Thrissur Medical College. He was in the board of Indian Medical council for 15 years. In 1964, he was chosen to medical faculty of Kerala University. He was visiting professor in Philadelphia, USA.

Along with Allopathy, he gave equal importance to Ayurveda also. His autobiography 'Maayillee kanakaksharangaal' (Golden letters never fade) was published in Malayalam as well as in English. Besides, there are about 80 books to his credit.

He earned the Dr B C Roy Award for the best physician in 1979. In 1984 he won the award of Swadeshi Shastra Prasthan. His other awards are M K Nambiar National IAAME, State award for the best book on surgery, Indian Association of Biomedical Scientists Award (1993) for Life Time Achievement.

Dr Madhavankutty was born as the fourth son of Chunangatt Kuttath Raman Nair and Parukutty Amma in Ottapalam. He was married to the late Kamalam who was the daughter TMK Nedungadi, nephew of Appu Nedungadi the author of the first Malayalam novel 'Kundalatha' and also founder of erstwhile Nedungadi Bank. He is survived by C Jairam (Director of Kotak Mahindra Bank) and Dr C Jayasri (US) and their spouses Usha and Prof Veliyathu Rajaram.



Then it was in Palakkad, now in Kanhangad

■ A couple of years ago, students of one of the oldest college of Kerala, Government Victoria College, Palakkad paid tribute by conducting a fake cremation of their Principal Dr T N Sarasu on her retirement day. She then alleged that the strong SFI students, who controlled the students' activities, did it at the behest of some members of the teachers who were part of the CPI (M) controlled teachers union.

The grave was then the gift of the



Dr Sarasu



The grave



Victoria College



Nehru College of Arts and Science



Dr Pushpaja



The Banner

students to their 'beloved' Principal. Before assuming charge of the Principal, Dr Sarasu was also a member of the same teachers' union.

Now the story is repeated in Kanhangad Nehru Arts and Science College, Kanhangad. According to the Principal, the students belonging to SFI paid tributes to her who 'died in their hearts.' Dr Pushpaja is to retire on May 31. The Management and the staff were giving a send off to them as some members of the staff barring Dr Pushpaja were retiring on March 31. Dr Pushpaja recollected that she was also an active member of SFI during her college days.

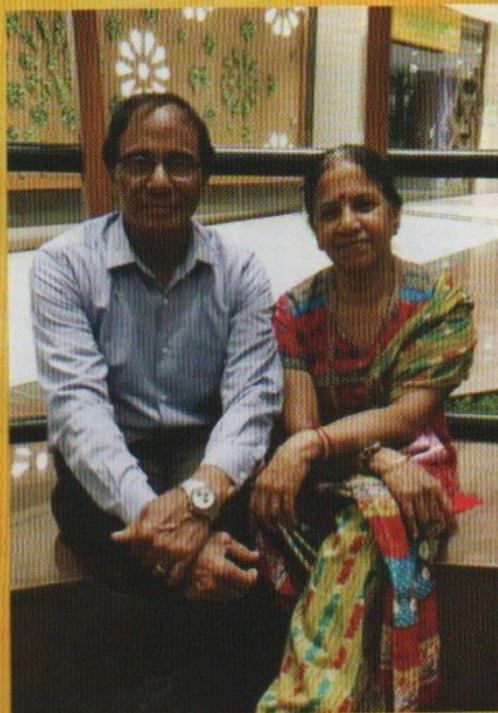
Leaders of SFI stated that they had no hand in this incident. Some members of staff said that during the lunch time, they could hear sound of crackers bursting and they came to know that sweets were distributed by the students.

Principal wanted to install CCTV inside the college compound but SFI vehemently protested at this move. Further, SFI used the seminar hall of the college to hold a unit meeting despite the principal denying the necessary permission. During the two years of her holding the post of Principal, students union came out with protest march against her whenever she attempted to

bring in disciplinary measures and the cases have often reached the police. On a few occasions, this led to the closure of the college for a few days.

In a statement, Dr Pushpaja said she too studied in the same college and she

always wanted to improve the standard of the college. As a result of her attempts, the college received Rs 1.10 crores as grant from the Department of Science and Technology and the college was given NAC A grade.



Wishing You
All Very Happy
VISHU

**K V Kunhiraman
& Family**
Mulund

Mithranandapuram Sree Vamanamoorthy Temple



Usha R. Menon

■ Divine intervention is not just a misgiving of the wild, frenzied mind; it is an experience to the faithful and an inexplicable mystery to the atheist.

Problems infest mankind in various ways and in spite of determined efforts to resolve them, they continue as life's perennial burdens. The fifth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, Vamana seems to be the only refuge to many, facing the storms in the sea of life. He alone provides the anchor or in some cases the wind to help one sail safely ashore. The power of this deity is unquestionable. He could give respite to the Devas in the Treta Yuga and now in this Kali Yuga, we have Him alone to turn to for refuge.

10 kms from Thrissur in Kerala is Mithranandapuram Temple, the abode of

Vamana. The idol is of a little cherubic boy in all divine glory looking on as his devotees fervently pray to him to ward off all obstacles that lie in their paths towards realising their dreams. Dreams to own a piece of land, a house of their fancy or even in some cases to sell off their landed property!

Mithranandapuram Temple is

situated in Perumanam Gramam in Thrissur District. The temple is on the Thrissur Thriprayar route, just 0.50 kms towards the west from Perumbilisseri Centre, Cherpu.

The idol of Vamana in this temple is believed to be 1500 years old. The recital of 'Ayathu Sivalogam' depicted in the Arattupuzha Temple (well known for Pooram, also celebrated as Deva Mela) nearby testifies this finding. Three Ooranma Namboodiri Illams namely Alakkattu Mana, Pattachomarayath Mana and Akkarachittur Mana own this temple. The chief Tanthri or priest is from Nedumpilly Tharananellur Mana,

and Annapoorneshwari enshrined in the North East pillar facing west. These are the 'Upadevas' of this temple. As one bows to the main deity Vamana in the sanctum sanctorum, one is amazed at the calm and peace around.

Vamana is fond of 'namajapa', the chanting of his names in praise and hence the temple reverberates with the namams of Vasudeva as devotees circumambulates around the chuttambalam lost in the world of sublime prayers and spiritual devotion.

Prathishta Dinam

Prathishta Dinam or the birthday of Mithranandapuram happen is celebrated on the Atham day in the month of Medam (Malayalam calendar). Special Poojas, Annadanam, Niramala, Bhajans are the important activities of Prathishta Dinam.

Main offerings

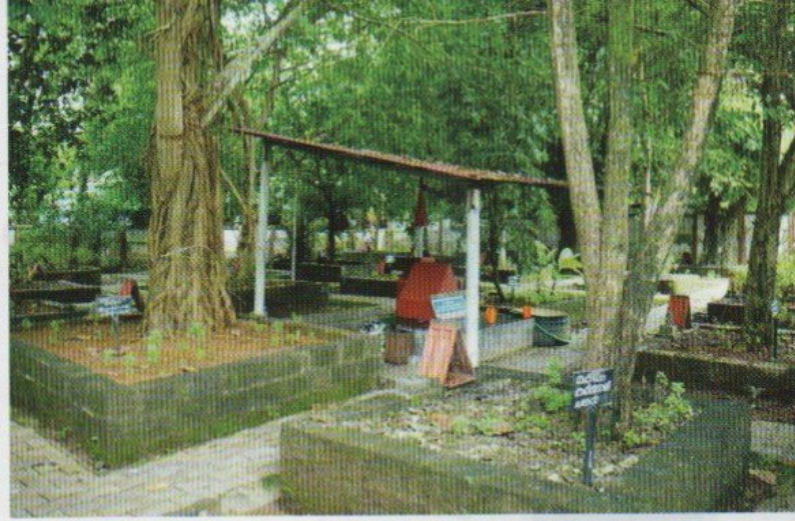
Pushpanjali, chanting the veda mantras, Thulasimala, Thirumadhuram, Kadalipazham,

Niramala, Payasam etc are the main offerings to Lord Vamana. Bhoomi Pooja and Bhoomi Danam are special offerings or Vazhipadu of the temple. These are offerings to resolve problems related to purchase and sale of landed properties and any other problems connected with land. This is done to commemorate the three feet of Bhoomi



Irinjalakuda.

The legend is that Swamiyar was the Othikkan (Priest of the temple) and had attained Samadhi in the temple. So as a custom, every devotee who visits the temple first worships Swamiyar before entering the 'Chuttambalam'. One enters the temple to find a niche for Ganesha on the south west, facing east



Nakshatra Vanam

donated by Mahabali to Lord Vamana.

Pushpanjali, Neyyuvilakku, Neypayasam, Ottayappam, Appam moodal, Mukha-charthu, Karukamala, Naranga (lemon) maala, breaking of coconut are the chief offerings to Lord Ganesha. Main offerings for Swamiyar are Vellanivedyam and Palpayasam. The main offerings to Annapoorneswari include Pushpanjali, Manjal, Neyyuvilakku, Chethimala, Bhagawathy Puja, Dwadasakshari mantra Pushpanjali and Kadum Payasam.

Thiruvonam Oottu and Dwadashi Oottu

Thiruvonam in Chingam (Bhadrapada) is the birthday of Lord Vamana.

Thiruvonam Oottu is a popular offering at this temple. Thiruvonaoottu is organised by the temple personnel on Thiruvonam day of every month. Kal kazhichu Oottu to Brahmin children is performed in the morning, followed by Akhanda Nama Japam, Prasada Oottu and Niramala in the evening. The expenses of the Thiruvonam Oottu is borne by the numerous devotees who willingly contribute, blissfully content at having their dreams of owning a much awaited new house or acquiring a property, realised by Lord Vamana. Dwadashi Oottu is also conducted monthly on Shuklapaksha Dwadasi day following the same procedures of Thiruvonam Oottu.

Sampoorna Yajurveda Yagna

The main festival of the temple is Sampoorna Yajurveda Yajna or Othu Kottu. Yajurveda Samhitha recital is one of the special prayers offered in the temple. Othu means Veda and Kottu means recitals. The whole text of Yajurveda is recited once in three years by Yajurveda Scholars from various parts of Kerala. Previously, the Yajna

was held by 10 Namboodiri families of the locality. At present, the yajna is performed as offerings by the above mentioned families and other devotees.

Nakshatra Vriksha Kshetram

This is a unique aspect of this temple. On the western side of the temple is the Nakshatra Vriksha Kshetram. Hinduism believes in the power of the Grahas or the planetary positions of the stars having an effect on one's life experiences. In this Vana, are 27 different trees pertaining to the 27 nakshatras and Devathas. One can water the trees and there are lamps provided to the devotee to light and offer prayers to the tree of his nakshatra. It is a totally extraordinary experience as one stands before the tree ordained to one's star, offering it water and lighting the lamp, feeling a special affinity towards all of it. Devotees believe that they get immunity from all fears, mental

retardation, accidents, early death etc. by worshipping these trees.

Temple timings

The temple is open from 5.30 to 10 in the morning and 5.30 to 7.30 in the evening except on special days like Thiruvonam, Prathishta Dinam. Othukkootu, lunar and solar eclipse days.

Mithranandapuram Vamana

The mood of the deity in the temple is that of blessing King Mahabali by a small boy with a 'kamandalu' (a small water pot) in one hand and a wooden umbrella in the other. Those who sacrifice themselves at the lotus feet of the deity get his blessings. Surrender yourself, your ego, greed for worldly pleasures, rivalry and jealousy, and the eternal fear of the uncertainties of life of the unknown tomorrow.

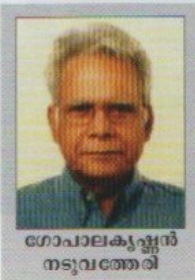


Vishu
Asamsakal



Rajan Nair
& Family
Thane

അട്ടപ്പാടി പാലക്കാട്ടല്ല, നമ്മുടെ ഓരോരുത്തരുടെയും ഉള്ളിലാണ്



ഗോപാലകൃഷ്ണൻ നടുവത്തേരി

അട്ടപ്പാടിയിൽ മധ്യ എന്ന ആദിവാസി യുവാവിനെ സ്വന്തം വസ്ത്രങ്ങളാൽ ബന്ധിച്ചും മർദ്ദിച്ചും എല്ലുകളൊടിച്ചും തലക്കടിച്ചും വധിച്ച സംഭവം നിണമണം മായാത്ത വാർത്തയാണ്. ആ യുവാവ് വിശന്നു ഭക്ഷണം തേടി അലയുകയുകയായിരുന്നു. ആമുദയത്തിൽ ഒന്നോ രണ്ടോ പഴക്കപ്പെട്ട അംഗങ്ങളായിരുന്നുള്ളൂ. മറ്റു അംഗത്തിന്റെ അംഗങ്ങളൊന്നുമില്ലായിരുന്നു. ദിവസങ്ങളോളം ആഹാരമൊന്നും കഴിച്ചിട്ടില്ലായിരുന്നു എന്നാണ് പോസ്റ്റ്മോർട്ടം റിപ്പോർട്ട് പറയുന്നത്.

ഒരു മനുഷ്യനെ മറ്റു മനുഷ്യർ സംഘം ചേർന്നു കൊല ചെയ്യുക, അതും ഈ വിധം പീഡിപ്പിച്ചു നിർദ്ദയമായി ഹനിക്കുക; ഒരു ശവകുടീരം വിലപോലും ആ മനുഷ്യജീവിക്ക് ലഭിക്കില്ലേ? ഒരു തെരുവുനായ, അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഒരു എലി മുതലായ ജീവികളെ ചില പ്രത്യേക പരിതസ്ഥിതികളിൽ മനുഷ്യർ ക്രൂരമായി വധിക്കാറുണ്ട്. ഇതങ്ങനെയൊന്നോ? നായ്ക്കളും മറ്റു മൃഗങ്ങളും തമ്മിൽ കലഹിക്കുകയും അന്യോന്യം ക്ഷതമേല്ക്കുകയും ചിലപ്പോൾ കൊല്ലുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നത് മിക്കവാറും വിശപ്പാകാൻ വേണ്ടിയാണ്. മനുഷ്യനോ?

മധുവിന്റെ വിഷയം പ്രാചീനയുഗത്തിലെ ഏതോ കാട്ടാളന്മാരുടെ ചരിത്രം വായിക്കുന്നതു പോലെയാണ്. സമീപകാലത്ത് നിലവിലുള്ള യുഗത്തിൽ, അതും ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സ്വന്തം നാട്ടിൽ, നടന്ന സംഭവമാണെന്ന് ചിന്തിക്കുമ്പോൾ അതിശയത്തിനറില്ല. രണ്ടായിരം കോടിയിലധികം ആദിവാസികളുടെ ഉന്നമനത്തിനു വേണ്ടി ചിലവഴിക്കുന്ന സംസ്ഥാനമാണ് കേരളം. അതിൽനിന്നും ഭിമമായ തുക ചുരുവിൽ കീശയിലാക്കി വെള്ളക്കോളർ വിഭാഗ അംഗങ്ങളായ പഠിച്ച കള്ളന്മാർ വാതാനുകൂലഗൃഹങ്ങളിൽ സുഷുപ്തിയിലണഞ്ഞു സുഖിക്കുന്നു.

ആദിവാസികൾക്കു വേണ്ടിയുള്ള ആനുകൂല്യങ്ങളുടെ യഥാർത്ഥ അർഹൻ, വിശന്നു വിലപിക്കുന്നവൻ, ക്രൂരമായി ഒരു നായയെപ്പോലെ ദയനീയമായി വധിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു, പട്ടാപ്പകൽ! അമാനുഷിക കർമ്മത്തിൽ ലയിക്കുമ്പോൾ ഒരുവന്റെയും ഹൃദയം തുടിച്ചില്ല. മനുഷ്യധർമ്മമായ ദയയുടെ ലാഞ്ചന പോലും ഉളവാക്കില്ല എന്നത് അതിശയം തന്നെ. നവീന ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ വിരോധാഭാസങ്ങൾ ഒന്നു വേറെത്തന്നെയാണ്.

ആ യുവാവിനെ സംഘംചേർന്നു വധിച്ച സമുദായമാന്യന്മാരും, ദിവസങ്ങൾക്കുമുമ്പ് ഷുഹൈബിനെ കൊല ചെയ്തവരും ചെയ്തിട്ടുവരുമായ രാഷ്ട്രീയ മാനുന്മാരും എല്ലാം നമ്മുടെ സമുദായത്തിന്റെ അംഗങ്ങളാണെന്നു നമുക്ക് ഖേദപൂർവ്വം ഓർമ്മിക്കാം. ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ചുറ്റും ചെങ്കുത്താമ്മാരും അസുരന്മാരും ഉണ്ടാകുമല്ലോ. അവർ വിദ്യാസമ്പന്നന്മാരാണ്; സാമാന്യവിവേകബുദ്ധിയുള്ളവരാണ്; സമർത്ഥന്മാരാണ്; പ്രത്യേകിച്ചും അഭ്യസ്ഥവിദ്യരെന്നു പേരുകേട്ട കേരളീയരാണ്. മിക്കവാറും സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ മുറുമുറു, ഡൽഹി, കൊൽക്കത്ത എന്നീ നഗരങ്ങളിലും പൊതുവെ മലയാളികളെ എല്ലാവർക്കും ഇഷ്ടമാണ്. മലയാളികളുടെ കൂടെ ഇടപാടുകൾ നടത്താൻ അവർക്ക് ഇഷ്ടമാണ്. കാരണം, സമുദായത്തിന്റെ കണ്ണിൽ മലയാളികൾ അഭ്യസ്ഥവിദ്യരാണ്, വിവരശേഷികളാണ്, പൊതുവെ മാനുന്മാരാണ്. മലയാളികളുടെ ആവക

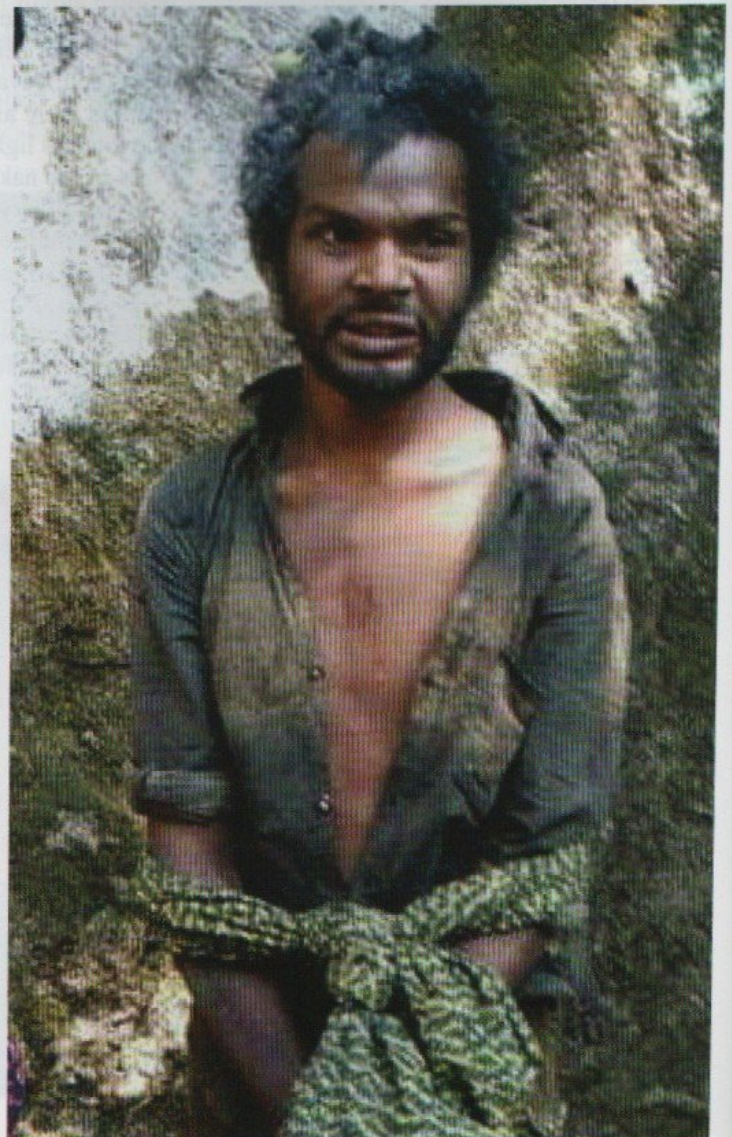
എല്ലാ സൽപേരുകളും ഇതോടെ അവസാനിച്ചു. നാം തല കുനിച്ചു നടക്കേണ്ടിവന്നിരിക്കുന്നു.

സ്വാർത്ഥതയോ, സാമൂഹ്യസ്നേഹമോ, ദേശീയചിന്താഗതിയോ, വ്യക്തിപരമായ കഴിവുകളെ പ്രദർശിപ്പിക്കാനുള്ള അതീവ അഭിനിവേശമോ, പണക്കൊതിയോ, എന്തായിരിക്കും ഈ അമാനുഷികതയുടെ പിന്നിലുള്ള ചേതോവികാരം എന്ന് നമുക്കൊന്ന് ചിന്തിച്ചുനോക്കാം.

മനുഷ്യൻ ഒരു സാമൂഹ്യജീവിയാണെന്നു മനഃശാസ്ത്രം നമ്മെ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. പക്ഷെ മനുഷ്യൻ ഒരു സാമൂഹികമൃഗമാണെന്നു നമുക്ക് അറിയാമെങ്കിലും പലപ്പോഴും ഉള്ളിന്റെയുള്ളിൽ അംഗീകരിക്കാൻ നാം വിസമ്മതിക്കുന്നു.

വന്യമൃഗത്തേക്കാൾ ക്രൂരനും നിർദ്ദയനും ആയ മനുഷ്യൻ സന്ദർഭം ലഭിച്ചാൽ മൃഗങ്ങളെ മാത്രമല്ല, പിശാചുക്കളെയും നിഷ്പ്രയാസം പരാജിതരാക്കും ക്രൂരതയിലും ദുഷ്ടതയിലും പൈശാചികത്തത്തിലും, നിസ്സംശയം.

മധുവിന്റെത് മതപരമായ ഒരു കൊലപാതകമല്ല, അതേസമയം രാഷ്ട്രീയവുമല്ല. കാരണം ആവിധ സുചനകളൊന്നുംതന്നെയില്ല നമ്മുടെ മുന്നിൽ. ഈ രണ്ടു



മധു

ഹത്യകളും നമ്മുടെ അമാനുഷികതയെ, വിവേകശൂന്യതയെ, ബുദ്ധിവിഹീനതയെയാണ് ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടുന്നത്. മധുവിനെ കൊന്നവർ വ്യക്തിപരചിന്താഗതിയിൽ മതി മറന്നു, സംഘടിതമാസ്മരികതയിൽ വിവേകശൂന്യരായി. രാഷ്ട്രീയ കൊലപാതകികൾ പണത്തിനോ, ആരെയെങ്കിലും പ്രീതിപ്പെടുത്താനോ, ഭയപ്പെട്ടിട്ടോ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ വ്യക്തിപരമായ താല്പര്യങ്ങൾക്കോ മനുഷ്യത്വത്തെ അടിയറ വെച്ചു. അവരെ മനുഷ്യരെന്നു വിളിക്കാമോ എന്നു നാം ചിന്തിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

മനുഷ്യർക്ക് നാലു സ്വഭാവവിശേഷതകളുണ്ട്. സ്വന്തം സുഖത്തിനും സൗകര്യങ്ങൾക്കും വേണ്ടി പ്രവർത്തിക്കാനുള്ള സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം, മറ്റുള്ളവരെക്കാൾ സമർത്ഥനാണെന്നു തെളിയിക്കാനുള്ള വൈബൽ, ബുദ്ധിയും ശരീരബലവും അധികമുണ്ടെന്നു സമർത്ഥിക്കാനുള്ള പ്രവണത, സമൂഹത്തെയും ദേശത്തെയും മറ്റുള്ളവരെക്കാൾ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു എന്നു സമർത്ഥിക്കാനുള്ള ആഗ്രഹം എന്നിവയാണവ. ഈ പ്രയാണത്തിൽ നാം മനുഷ്യരാണ്, മനുഷ്യരായിത്തന്നെ ജീവിക്കണം എന്നുള്ള അനിവാര്യത പലപ്പോഴും വിസ്മരിക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. നാം നമ്മെത്തന്നെ മനസ്സിന്റെ വിപരീത വൈകാരിക വ്യതിയാനങ്ങൾക്ക് അടിയറ വെക്കുന്നു.

ഈ വികാരാധീനതയിൽ നമ്മുടെ പ്രവർത്തികൾ മറ്റുള്ളവരിൽ ഏല്പിക്കുന്ന ഹാനികളെപ്പറ്റി നാം വിസ്മരിക്കുന്നു.

മനുഷ്യർ അനുഭവിക്കുന്ന എല്ലാ ദുഃഖങ്ങൾക്കും ദുരിതങ്ങൾക്കും മനഃക്ലേശങ്ങൾക്കും കാരണം മറ്റുള്ളവർ ഏല്പിക്കുന്ന ദ്രോഹങ്ങളും ചതിയും വഞ്ചനയുമാണ്. യഥാർത്ഥത്തിൽ ഇതുതന്നെയാണ് മനുഷ്യൻ ലഭ്യമായ ശാപവും. പ്രകൃതി നമുക്ക് ചിന്തിക്കാനുള്ള കഴിവ് പ്രത്യേകമായി നൽകിയിരിക്കുന്നു. പക്ഷെ നാം മനസ്സിന്റെ വികാരങ്ങൾക്ക് അടിമപ്പെടുവാൻ അനുവദിക്കുമ്പോൾ ഉത്ഭവിക്കുന്ന ആവേശത്തിമർപ്പിൽ പരിസ്ഥിതിബോധം പോലും കൈവെടിയുന്നു. ഈ സ്വഭാവവ്യതിയാനപാരമ്പര്യം മനുഷ്യർക്കു മാത്രമേയുള്ളൂ. മറ്റുള്ള ജീവികളിൽ പ്രകൃതിതന്നെ ഇത് ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഉദാഹരണത്തിന്, ഒരു നായ കടലിൽ ചെന്നാലും നക്കിയേ കുടിക്കൂ, ഒരു സിംഹം ഒരിക്കലും സസ്യഭുക്കാകുകയില്ല. മറ്റു ജീവികൾക്കും പ്രകൃതി വിരുദ്ധമായ പ്രവർത്തികളിൽ ഏർപ്പെടാൻ സാധ്യമല്ല. മനുഷ്യന് ഈ സ്വഭാവവിശേഷതയിൽനിന്ന് രക്ഷപ്പെടാൻ ബുദ്ധിയും വിവേകവും ഉപയോഗത്തിൽ വരുത്തണം.

ഒരു ഗുരുവും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ശിഷ്യനും ഒരു ദിവസം നദിയിൽ കുളിക്കാൻ പോയി. രണ്ടുപേരും നദിയിലിറങ്ങി മുങ്ങിക്കുളിക്കാൻ തെയ്യാറെടുത്തു. പെട്ടെന്ന് ഒരു തേൾ ഗുരുവിനരികിൽ നീന്തിത്തുടിക്കുന്നത് അദ്ദേഹം കാണുകയും അതിനെ പൊക്കിയെടുത്ത് കൈപ്പടയിൽവെച്ച് കരയിലേക്ക് നടക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. ശിഷ്യൻ പിന്നാലെയും വഴിയെ ആ തേൾ ഗുരുവിനെ കുത്താൻ ശ്രമിക്കുകയും ഗുരു അതിനെ വെള്ളത്തിൽ ഇടുകയും വീണ്ടും പൊക്കിയെടുത്ത് നടക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. കരയിൽ എത്തുന്നതുവരെ ഈ പ്രക്രിയ തുടർന്നു. ഒടുവിൽ അതിനെ കരയിലെത്തിച്ച ശേഷം ഗുരു ആശ്വാസപൂർവ്വം ഒരു നെടുവീർപ്പിടുന്നു. ഇതെല്ലാം നിരീക്ഷിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്ന ശിഷ്യൻ ഗുരുവിനോട്, “ആ തേൾ അങ്ങയെ വീണ്ടും വീണ്ടും കുത്താൻ ശ്രമിക്കുമ്പോൾ അങ്ങ് അതിനെ രക്ഷിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുകയായിരുന്നല്ലോ. അതിനെ വിധിയെന്നു കരുതി അതിന്റെ വഴിക്ക് വിടുന്നതല്ലേ ബുദ്ധി?”

“കുത്തുകയെന്നത് തേളിന്റെ പ്രകൃതിദത്തമായ പ്രവണതയാണ്. രക്ഷിക്കുക എന്നത് മനുഷ്യനായ എന്റെതും. എപ്പോഴും നാം മനുഷ്യരായിത്തന്നെ ജീവിക്കണം.

അതൊരിക്കലും മറക്കരുത്.”

ഈ അടുത്ത കാലത്ത് മദ്ധ്യപ്രദേശിൽ ഒരു വിദ്യാലയത്തിൽ മുഖ്യ അധ്യാപകനെപ്പറ്റി മോശമായ ഒരു പ്രസ്താവനയിൽപ്പെരുവെച്ചു എന്ന കുറ്റത്തിന് 68 വിദ്യാർത്ഥിനികളെ വിവസ്ത്രകളാക്കി ശിക്ഷിക്കുകയുണ്ടായി.

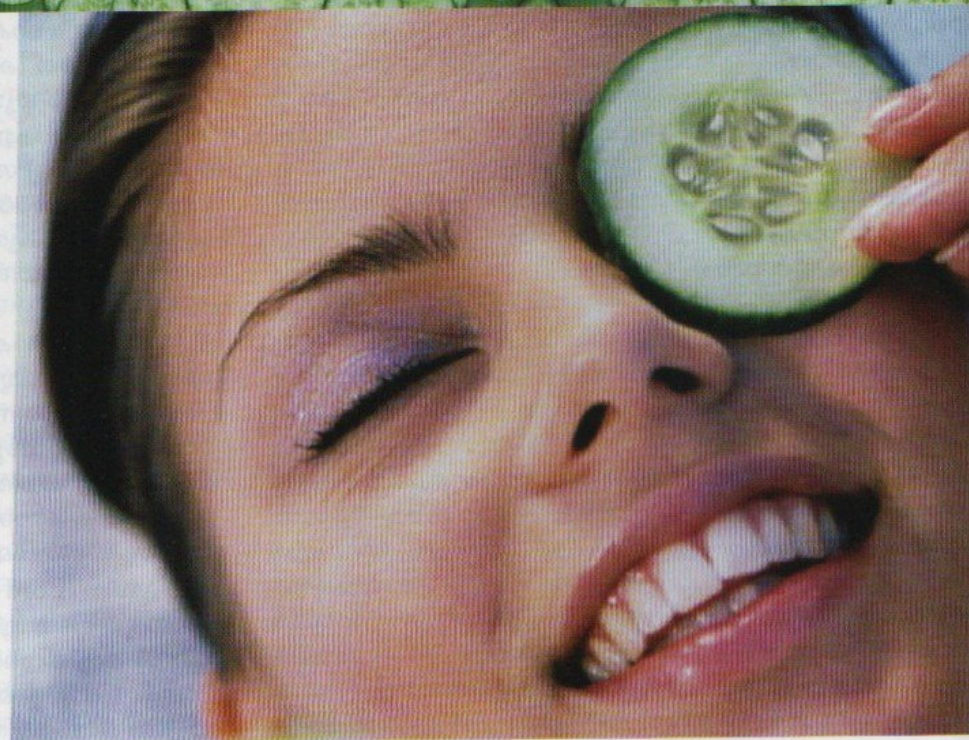
ഇത് മഹാഭാരതകാലങ്ങളിൽ നടന്ന സംഭവമല്ല. ഈ മനുഷ്യതരകുറ്റകൃത്യം ചെയ്തവർ ദുര്യോധനന്റെ ആജ്ഞ പ്രകാരം ദുശ്ശാസനൻ ചെയ്ത പാണ്ഡാലീവസ്ത്രാപഹരണകഥ ഓർമ്മിച്ചുകാണും. മഹാഭാരതവും മറ്റു പുരാണഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങളും നാം ദുര്യോധനരാകരുത് എന്ന സന്ദേശമാണ് നൽകുന്നത്. പക്ഷെ നാം നമ്മുടെ സ്വാർത്ഥതാല്പര്യങ്ങളുടെ ഒഴുക്കിൽ അത് വിസ്മരിക്കുന്നു. ജീവിതത്തിൽ അമാനുഷരാകാനുള്ള സന്ദർഭങ്ങൾ സുലഭം, മനുഷ്യനാകാനുള്ളവയാകട്ടെ വിരളവും. അവ വിരലിലെണ്ണാം.

വിലും ഗോൾഡിംഗ് എന്ന വിശ്വവിഖ്യാതനായ എഴുത്തുകാരൻ തന്റെ 1954-ൽ എഴുതിയ ‘ലോർഡ് ഓഫ് ദ ഫ്ലൈസ്’ (Lord of the flies) എന്ന ഗ്രന്ഥത്തിൽ വിമാനദുർഘടനയുടെ ഭാഗമായി ഒരു ദ്വീപിൽപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു സംഘം കുട്ടികളുടെ കഥ വിവരിക്കുന്നു. ഈ കഥ ലോകമെമ്പാടും കോളിളക്കൾ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചു. കുട്ടികൾ ആരംഭത്തിൽ കാട്ടിലെ ജീവിതം ആസ്വദിച്ചുവെങ്കിലും കുറച്ചു ദിവസങ്ങൾക്കുള്ളിൽ അവർ സ്കൂൾ ജീവിതവും ഹോംവർക്കും ട്യൂഷൻക്ലാസും എല്ലാം മറക്കുകയും രക്ഷപ്പെടുക എന്ന ലക്ഷ്യത്തിൽ എത്തിച്ചേരുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. ജാക്ക് എന്ന സംഘടനാനേതാവിന്റെ പ്രഭാവത്തിലും രക്ഷപ്പെടാൻ കഴിയാത്ത നിരാശയിലും അവരിൽ ഏറ്റവും പ്രായം കുറഞ്ഞ സൈമൺ എന്ന കുട്ടിയെ കൊന്നു തിന്നുകയും തുടർന്നു കിരാതനൃത്തമാടുകയും ചെയ്തു. ആ കുട്ടികൾ കാട്ടിലായിരുന്നു. ഭക്ഷണമില്ലാതെയും രക്ഷിതാക്കളില്ലാതെയും രക്ഷയില്ലാതെയും അവർ അലയുകയായിരുന്നു. ഇവിടെ ആദിവാസി യുവാവ് ശരിയായ കാട്ടിൽനിന്നും പുരോഗമനാധികൃതത്തിൽ മതി മറന്നാടുന്ന മനുഷ്യമൃഗങ്ങൾ നിറഞ്ഞ കാട്ടിലേക്കാണ് പ്രവേശിച്ചത്. കുട്ടികളായാലും മുതിർന്നവരായാലും മനുഷ്യരെല്ലാവരും വികാരാധീനരാണ്. സംഘടനാനേതാക്കളുടെ നല്ല നടപ്പിനുള്ള ജാമ്യവും നല്ല ചിന്താഗതിയും ആണ് ഇത്തരം സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിൽ നമ്മെ രക്ഷിക്കുന്നത്.

കുറങ്ങന്റെ കയ്യിൽ വാളു കൊടുത്താലുള്ള പരിതസ്ഥിതിയാണ് നാം ഇന്ന് അനുഭവിക്കുന്നത്. മാനുഷികമൂല്യങ്ങൾ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന സംഘടനാ നേതാക്കൾ വേണം. അതാണ് ഏത് തലമുറയുടെയും ആവശ്യം. നല്ല ചിന്തകളെ വളർത്തിയെടുക്കാൻ പ്രത്യേകപരിശീലനം നൽകേണ്ടത് എല്ലാവരുടേയും ഉത്തരവാദിത്തമാണ്.

എല്ലാ പ്രവൃത്തികളും ചിന്തകളിൽക്കൂടിയാണ് ഉടലെടുക്കുന്നത്. ഈ നല്ല ചിന്തകൾക്കുവേണ്ടിയാണ് നാം പ്രാർത്ഥനകൾ നടത്തേണ്ടത്. ഈ സംസ്കാര ചിന്താഗതികളും ദിനചര്യകളും പ്രാവർത്തികമാക്കാനുള്ള മുഖ്യ പങ്ക് സംഘടനാനേതാക്കളിലാണ് നിക്ഷിപ്തമായിരിക്കുന്നത്. കുഞ്ഞുണ്ണിമാഷ് രചിച്ച പ്രാർത്ഥനായുക്തമായ ഈ കവിത എല്ലാവരും വിദ്യാലയങ്ങളിലും മറ്റു സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളിലും ദിനാരംഭത്തിൽത്തന്നെ കേൾക്കുകയും കേൾപ്പിക്കുകയും വേണമെന്ന് സമുദായം നമ്മോട് ആവശ്യപ്പെടുന്നു.

“നല്ല വാക്കു ചൊല്ലേണം, നന്മ ചെയ്തുവാഴേണം
നാമഘോഷമെന്നുമെന്റെ നാവിലായ് വന്നീടേണം.
നല്ല ചിന്തയേകണം, മനസ്സു ശുദ്ധമാകേണം
നിത്യനായ ശിൽപകാശരൂപനെ വണങ്ങേണം.” ■



HOME REMEDIES FOR DARK CIRCLES



Dr. (Major) Nalini
Janardhanan

■ Dark circles under the eyes can be covered with cosmetics and makeup. As per advice by beauticians, it is better to apply moisturizer first, as many cosmetics can

lead to dryness of skin. Apply foundation make up with a matte or semi-matte finish. Make up should not cake on to your face. It may give an old look to the face. Blush can help to conceal dark circles. Powder blush is useful but not if you have dry skin. Concealer can help to hide dark circles. Try to find a concealer can help to hide dark circles. Try to find a concealer which matches your skin tone. Apply it with brush and not finger as it can smudge or smear. Don't apply over the counter medicines or cosmetic creams which claim to cure dark circles, consult a doctor.

Some of the home remedies suggested by grandmothers and beauticians are given below:

Turmeric

Apply a mixture of turmeric and almond oil or turmeric and buttermilk. Wash off with water after 10 minutes. Use this thrice a

week.

Saffron

Soak Saffron strands in milk for a few minutes. Then apply with a cotton ball. Wait for 10-15 minutes and wash with cold water.

Aloe Vera Gel

Massage it under eyes and clean with a moist cotton after 15 minutes. You may also keep it overnight

Raw Milk

Place cotton balls dipped in cold raw milk on your eyes. Wash off after 15 minutes. Milk will moisturize the skin making it soft and supple.

Cucumber

Cut thick slices of Cucumber and place them in fridge for ½ hour. Then place them on your eyes and take rest for 15-20 minutes. Alternatively you can extract cucumber juice and apply on dark circles before sleep.

Potato

Potato slices or potato juice is good for dark circles. It also helps to reduce puffy eyes. Grate potatoes and extract juice. Apply with cotton ball. Let it remain for 10 minutes. Then wash off with water.

Rose Water

Place cotton pads soaked in rose water on eyes for 15 minutes. It will help to relax your eyes and reduce fatigue of eyes. Apply rose water every night before sleep and wash off in the morning.

Honey

Apply a thin layer of raw organic honey, wait for 20 minutes and rinse off with water.

Tomatoes

Apply tomato juice and let it remain overnight wash off in the morning. Or apply lemon juice with tomato juice and wash it after 10 minutes.

Orange Juice

Mix orange juice with



glycerin and apply on dark circles

Green Tea Bags

Place used greentea bags in fridge to make them chilled. Place them over



eyes and lie down. Rest for about 15 minutes in shade (avoid lying down in sunlight). Wash your face.

Mint Leaves

Crush mint leaves and make a smooth paste by mixing water. Apply it on dark circles. After 10 minutes wash off with cold water.

Lemon Juice

Squeeze out lemon juice, put a cotton ball in it. Apply on dark circles. Keep it for 10 minutes and wash it with water.



Coconut Oil

Apply coconut oil and massage. Leave it

overnight and wash off in the morning.

Jojoba Oil

Apply before sleep. Massage and leave it overnight.

Olive Oil

Massage with virgin olive oil on

dark circles for a few minutes. Leave it overnight and rinse in the morning.

Castor Oil

Apply a drop of castor oil on dark circles and massage gently. Keep it overnight and wash off in the morning.

Sweet Almond Oil

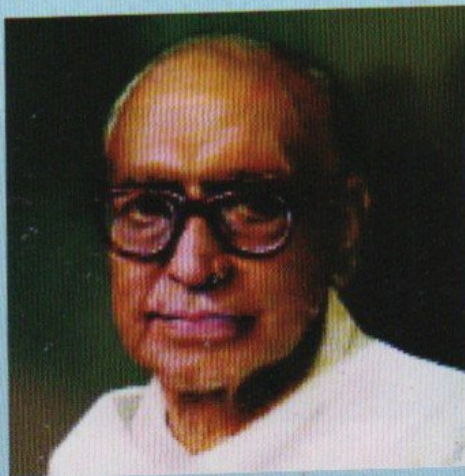
A gentle massage with sweet Almond oil will improve blood circulation and hydrate skin around eyes making it soft. Leave it overnight and wash off in the morning. Bitter Almond oil is used in Aromatherapy. It must not be used on skin or taken orally.

Avocado Eye Mask

Place a slice of ripe Avocado under the eyes. Or make a mask with a teaspoon Avocado pulp and 2 drops of sweet Almond oil. Leave for 15 minutes. Wash off with cold water.

Navati of Kerala Kalamandalam

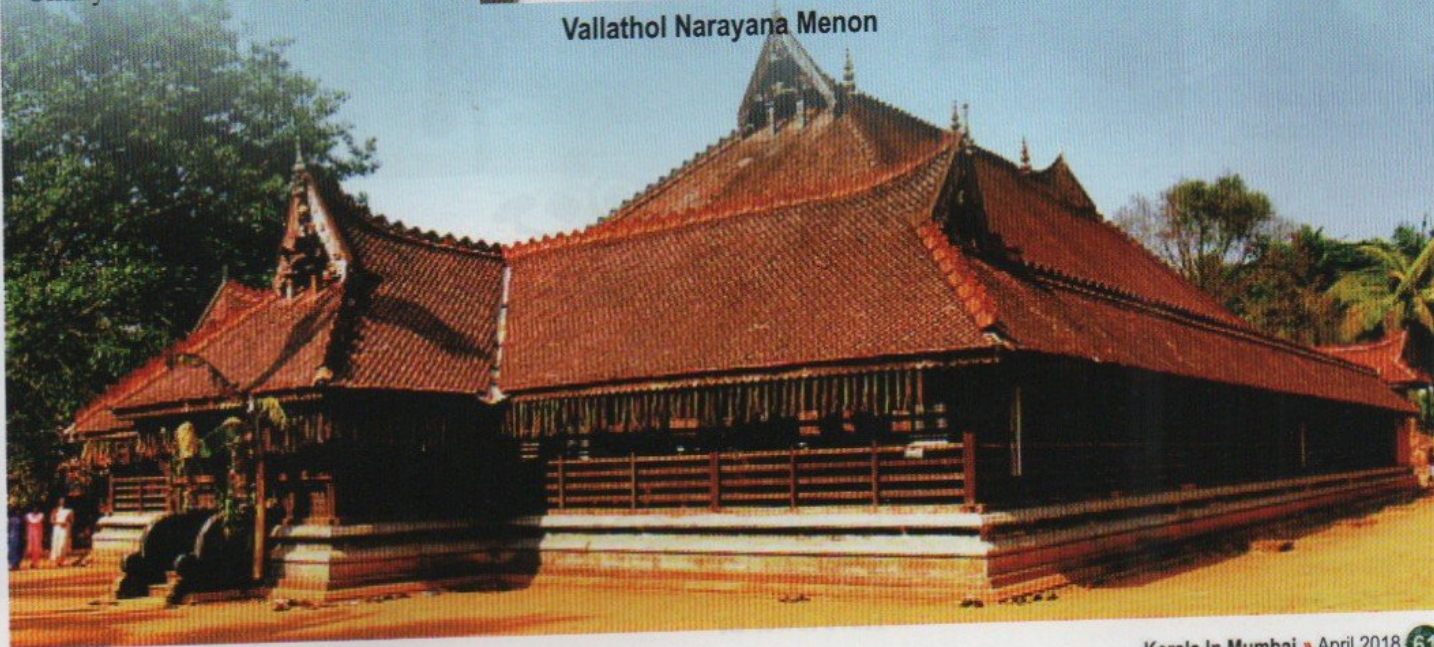
Kerala Kalamandalam, founded by Poet Vallathol Narayana Menon, Mukunda Raja and Kunhunni Thampuran, is now moving towards its Navati. It has already achieved the status of Deemed University. It was registered in 1927. The aim of the institution was to encourage Kerala centric visual arts such as Mohiniattam, Kathakali, Chakyarkoothu, Kootiyattam,



Vallathol Narayana Menon

Thullal etc. It started operating in Kakkad, Thrissur and finally moved to Cheruthuruthi, now known as Vallathol Nagar. During its Silver Jubilee celebrations, then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was the Chief Guest.

By the time the Navati celebrations are declared, it is hoped to get the status of a full fledged university. Another ambition is to get the NAAC accreditation.





Be Active and Move Towards Health

Dr. (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

It is very important to be physically active to improve your health and decrease risk of developing diseases like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, type 2 Diabetes, hypertension, stroke etc. Physical activity can also lower the risk of falls, depression and early death. In children, physical activity can improve bone health, cognitive skills, and ability to concentrate and pay attention, cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness. Physical activity and exercises have both immediate and longterm health benefits. Regular physical activity of minimum 30 minutes a day can improve your quality of life.

Inactive people are twice as likely to develop heart diseases as those who are more active. The good news is that physical activity can protect your heart in many ways regular activity something as simple as a brisk 30 minutes walk every day- can help you to reduce your risk of heart diseases by burning extra calories which helps to reduce excess weight or stay at your desirable weight.

Benefits of regular physical activity

- Manage your weight better
- Reduce the risk of heart attack
- Have a lower blood cholesterol
- Strengthens your lungs and helps



them to work more efficiently.

- Builds stamina
- Tones and strengthens your muscles
- Keeps your joints in good condition
- Have stronger bones, muscles and joints
- Slow down bone loss and lower the risk of osteoporosis
- Lower the risk of type 2 Diabetes Mellitus and some cancers (Breast Cancer and Colon cancer)
- Have lower BP

- Lower your risk of falls by improving balance.
- Feel better with more energy, better mood, feel more relaxed and sleep better.
- Exercise helps to cure depression
- Recover better from periods of hospitalization or bedrest

■ Regular physical activity can also boost the way you feel

It may

- Builds confidence
- Give you more energy
- Help you to relax and cope better with stress
- Allow you to fall asleep more quickly and sleep more sound
- Help you to beat the blues of depression

- Provide an enjoyable way to share time with family and friends

Types:

Three types of activities are important for a complete physical activity programme

- 1 Aerobic activity like Brisk walking, jogging, bicycling
- 2 Resistance training or strength training like pushups, lunges, biceps curls using dumbbells
- 3 Flexibility exercises like sitting

cross legged on floor and gently pushing down on the tops of your legs to stretch the inner thigh muscles.

4 Taking medical advice: some people should get medical advice before starting or increasing physical activity. Check with your doctor first

■ if you are over 50 years old and not used to moderately energetic activity.

■ Currently have a heart problem, have developed chest pain within the last month or had a heart attack

■ Have a parent or sibling who developed heart disease at an early age.

■ Have any other chronic health problem or risk factors for a chronic disease

■ Tend to easily lose your balance or become dizzy

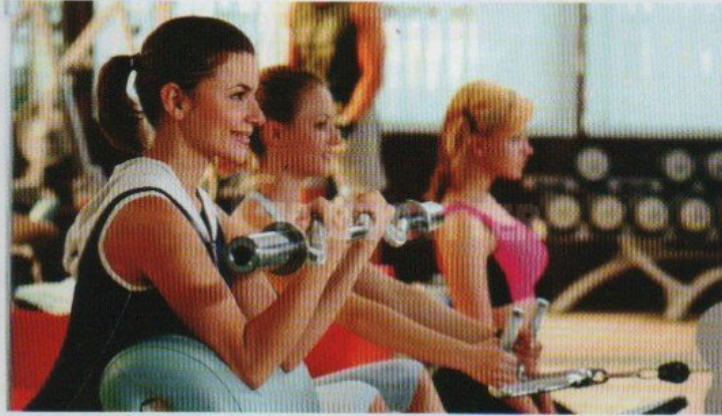
■ Feel extremely breathless after mild exertion

■ Are on any type of medication

Remember

Doing any physical activity is better than doing more. Start by doing some

physical activity and gradually build up to the recommended amount. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily. Try to find time for some regular vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness benefits. Minimize the amount of time spent in prolonged sitting. Break up long periods of sitting as often as



possible. When it comes to getting in shape, what is good for you is good for your whole family. So start physical activity along with your family.

It is easier to stay physically active over time if you take advantage of everyday opportunities to move around

like

■ Take the stairs instead of elevator, both up and down.

■ Park your vehicle a few blocks away from office or store or market and walk the rest of the way.

■ While working, take a frequent breaks. Get up and stretch, walk around and give your muscles and mind a chance to relax.

■ Do house work or gardening at a more vigorous pace.

■ When you travel, walk around the bus station, railway station or airport rather than sitting and waiting.

■ Keep moving while you watch TV. Lift hand weights, do some gentle yoga stretches or pedal an exercise bike.

Becoming physically active gradually becomes a habit and pleasure. It is one

of the best choices that you can make for yourself and your health. So make the choice today! Go for a walk, swim, do bicycling, jogging or dance. Do whatever you enjoy and do it regularly to keep fit and healthy. ■



KAIRALI CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

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SILVER JUBILEE

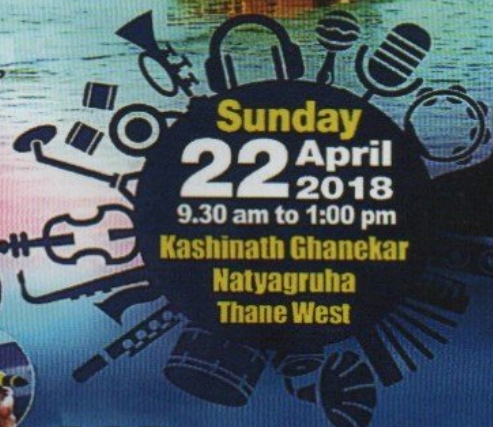
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ZOLPIDEM ADDICTION



Dr Sujatha Nair

■ Zolpidem is a non benzodiazepine prescription medication used in the treatment of insomnia. It is known to induce and enhance the quality of sleep.

Long term use can result in drug tolerance which can lead to increased use, abuse and addictive use.

Common brand names of the same are Ambien, Zolfresh etc

Addiction to Zolpidem is a growing problem in India and the rest of the world. It is not supposed to be available over the counter without prescription.

The effect of sedation sets in within 15 minutes of consumption of the drug making it fast acting in the initial periods.

Side effects of use

Intoxication, Changes in sexual desire - usually reduction in the same, amnesia, hallucinations, imbalance in gait, nausea, vomiting, impaired judgement and reasoning abilities, rebound insomnia, increased appetite, delusions and hallucinations

It can also result in blackout behaviors, that is the person is asleep

but is walking, eating, talking, driving etc under the influence of the medication but has no memory of the same making it very dangerous if this happens. It impairs memory, the person can forget that he has taken the medication and can then take more.

Zolpidem abuse and addiction

It can lead to respiratory shut down due to excessive sedation slipping the person into a coma. Many times it is combined with other drugs like cocaine or MDMA to bring down the high. In combination with alcohol it can increase sedation and cause comatose conditions.

Addiction - makes the person unable to fall asleep without increased quantum of consumption and beyond medical doses.

Dizziness, motor in coordination leading to imbalance. There is suppression of the central nervous system leading to tremendous fatigue. Withdrawal symptoms occur when stopped.

Suicidal ideations and tendencies, mood swings to aggression to depression. Inability to work and focus due to continuous sedation and dullness of the sensorium.

Withdrawals

Anxiety, tremors, fatigue, mood swings, abdominal cramps, uncontrolled crying and depression, rapid heart rate and breathing, panic attacks, rebound insomnia, sweating Seizures, flushing, craving.

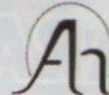
Treatment

Detoxification is the first step. The drug needs to be tapered of carefully, initially giving an alternative sleep aid. The effects will take about 6-8 weeks to leave the system.

Simultaneous treatment is of the individual to enable the person to deal with ones addictive traits and emotional issues in a loving accepting ambience with the help of Meditation, Counseling and other therapies that will aid in getting the person to focus on one self beyond the substance.

Thus this unassuming tablet that was seen as an effective sleep aid has the potential to become a problem. ■

For any clarifications contact
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Marubhoomiyile Mazhathullikal

Marubhoomiyile Mazhathullikal (Raindrops of Desert) depicts the story of Sethumadhavanunni, his wife Gowri and their children Pooja and Manu.

Ignoring the objections of parents, Sethu and his family shift to a new home because of the pressures of Gowri. Sethu pledges the properties and gold of Gowri to start a liquor bar but he falls into deep debt because of the move of the government to close down such bars. The money lenders put enormous pressure on Sethu and he resorts to drinking to escape from mental pressure.

The continuous quarrels between Sethu and Gowri on account of loss of wealth and the resultant debt separate them from each other. Gowri then receives a telephone call from a stranger and gradually they come closer.

The financial insecurity and anarchy lead Sethu into undesirable elements and make him a drug addict. The impending uncertainty of future compels Pooja to take some initiatives to prevent the uncertain future with the assistance of her teacher and uncle to bring her parents and brother to normalcy. This part forms the second half of the movie.

This film makes us laugh, ponder and cry and bring the characters to normalcy. The family then reunites



with their parents. The film also encourages the youth to act instead of being lazy.

Ramachandran and Uma Nair handle the pivotal characters of Sethu and Gowri. Other characters are Devan, Sarayu, Gokul, Balaji, Ajay Joseph, Sudhish, Sunil, Sugathan, Shaju Palakkad, Chembil Asokan, Balachandran Chulikkad et al. Anil Karakulam directs it. Najeem Arshad and Hisham Abdul Wahab render the songs, whose lyrics are written by Harinarayanan.



Kerala in Mumbai

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— 98201 10509 —