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A Change in Mindset is the Need of the Hour

Sexual assault is a phenomenon that we have seen on the rise in recent times. A sick mind uses this as a means to score a point to showcase one's superiority over others, not necessarily over the women. We have often read in the columns of newspapers that it is resorted to in several countries around the world when someone wanted to score a point over another. It is done not necessarily to satiate one's lusty urges but to entertain a sick mind by capturing the act on camera and circulating them on various electronic media to humiliate the victim and her kith and kin, to make money by selling them or blackmailing the victims and her relatives to subjugate them. Probably this is the only act that punishes the victim till her death while the perpetrator roams free.

Since time immemorial, sexual assault is in practice in our country if our epics are to be believed. The assault not necessarily physical but could also be mental. When the western world does not see a rape as a blot on the victim, in the Indian subcontinent it is the other way. Not only the victim but her entire family is looked down and the onlookers derisively laugh upon them. It is this mindset that needs to be changed. Hundreds of similar cases are happening around, a few are reported in the press and hardly any one is brought to justice. Often the victim is not only assaulted but also pay money to the perpetrator not to reveal the matter or circulate the pictures.

What differentiates human beings from animals is the ability to suppress what is happening in the mind and not to implement the thoughts in the open. It is this trait that makes him civilized. The entire humanity is governed by a sense of morality, taught by the elders at home, in the community and leaders of the religious bodies. Realising the fact that morality itself is not a binding factor, religious texts prescribe them as commandments, laws are enacted in every country and punishments are prescribed to the violators. Yet such acts do happen and now it has reached an unfathomable stage.

Recently we have come to know that sexual assaults are perpetuated against innocent helpless women at home, at their place of work, on moving trains irrespective of the time of the day and often total justice is denied to the victim and her families. We have even coined a name 'Nirbhaya' to the victim, lighted hundreds of candles to declare support and yet the culprits in most of the cases escaped punishments that they rightly deserved.

Our law makers and leaders of the society often pour fuel to the already existing fire by making statements such as "Boys will remain boys," "What was the need for the girl to travel at night?", "It was an isolated incident" etc. Party General Secretary contradicts the Chief Minister, minister and leader of an allied party of the governing front issue diverse statements, allegations of police taking the matter easy, adverse political interventions etc all are seen in such cases. It only shows that there is no identical approach even among leaders. It would be better if only one person clarifies the matter, take the ultimate action after consulting others and also be responsible for the implementation.

We are saying all these issues not because some film actress in Kerala became a victim of kidnap and sexual assault now and statements are coming from all corners of the country. Similar incidents happened earlier also and our heart bled even then. It is quite easy to talk from the housetop but very difficult to act at the ground levels, especially so when the source is not physical but mental or psychological. It is an illness that is not only rapidly spreading but encouraging the sick person to act without any restraint.

We have laws that prescribe the various sections associated with sexual crimes and the punishments thereon, even death sentence if the victim is killed after the act. None of these statutes completely succeeded in eradicating the crime. It is high time that we start thinking of steps to be undertaken to totally route out such sinister crimes. We have to ensure that a person once arrested for such a crime is denied bail, parole if sentenced guilty and also no release from prison if found guilty. To countermand false accusations, the so called victim should be made liable to pay compensation for the time spent behind bars and mental stress. Though punishments are prescribed as a detriment, we have seen in several cases, such punishments did not become a detriment and hence the longest imprisonment without any sops is suggested so that the culprit would not have another chance to repeat the crime.

Is Kerala a part of India?

The above caption may be a little confusing. But after going through the following details you will be convinced about the sarcastic statement made by me. Our 68th Republic Day was celebrated as usual and in New Delhi. There were breathtaking march past and display by way of Tableau by 17 states with their colourful cultural extravaganza. Our 'God's own country' Kerala was conspicuous by its absence in displaying the state's culture for reasons known only to God. This has happened because our law makers prioritise politics over patriotism. *Bharathamennal Paarin Naduvil Kevalam Oru Piti Mannalla Janakotikal Namme Namai Mattiya Janna Grihamallo.* Our so called rulers have made a mockery of the above song. Whatever the difference of opinions, political revenge etc should be forgotten, at least on such important historic days when we are expected to come together and express our solidarity especially towards our Defence personnel who defend our motherland, some of them even laying down their precious lives for our sake. There are sizeable number of Malayalees in Army, Navy and Air Force right from the olden days. Indian Air Force was nicknamed 'India Nair Force' once upon a time. The above indifference is an insult to all the Defence personnel and all Malayalees. It is high time people emulate the recent agitation in Chennai keeping the politicians and media

persons away from the scene. The people who have elected their representatives should have a right to question their unpatriotic action and ensure that such shameful incidents do not recur. 'Is Kerala a Part of India' in the real sense. You be the judge.

Damodaran Unny
Mulund

Late Rajesh Pillai A tribute

I wish to inform you that according to a report, the screenplay of the movie *Traffic* by late Rajesh Pillai has been officially included in the curriculum for the final semester of B.A. by the Cannanore University. This is a matter of pride for the members of the bereaved family of the great filmmaker Rajesh and all those associated with the movie. Incidentally, my daughter Divya Unny (Bollywood actor) has acted in the Hindi version of the movie as the wife of Traffic Havaldar. As you know the movie is based on a heart transplantation that happened in Chennai in record time saving the life of a girl and thus carries an important message of 'donating vital organs', eventually giving life to someone.

Damodaran Unny
Mulund

Stage plays and modern audience

The Editorial in February 2017 issue of KIM reminded me of the Bard's famous lines often quoted and misquoted and I

wish to quote the original immortal lines: "All the world's a stage. And all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and entrances. And one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven stages."

Thus the content of the editorial made me ponder when a man's whole life consists of so many parts and acts why should there be a dearth of material for drama. Apart from its social implications stage plays are where the actors performing talents glow in full glory sans all supports, visual, sound and other props. But as the editorial mourns, why the lack of interest in stage? To put it in the youngsters lingua "Ye dil mange more" Gone are the days of simple but intellectually edifying entertainment. Superficiality, slapstick humour, shallow contemporary, ribtickling thrillers and unbridled sexuality has taken hold of the audience, who shy away from deeper truths of life and fail to appreciate its presentation on stage. *Khassakkinte Ithihasam* was a fresh breeze in the world of entertainment and good art. As long as humanity exists there is room for stage plays but it can be kept alive provided the audience is not asphyxiated by modern hi-tech entertainment tools.

Ms. Saroja
Goregaon East

The article 'The Athanis' that was published in February 2017 Issue of Kerala In Mumbai was written by KG Kutty Thane. The omission is regretted.

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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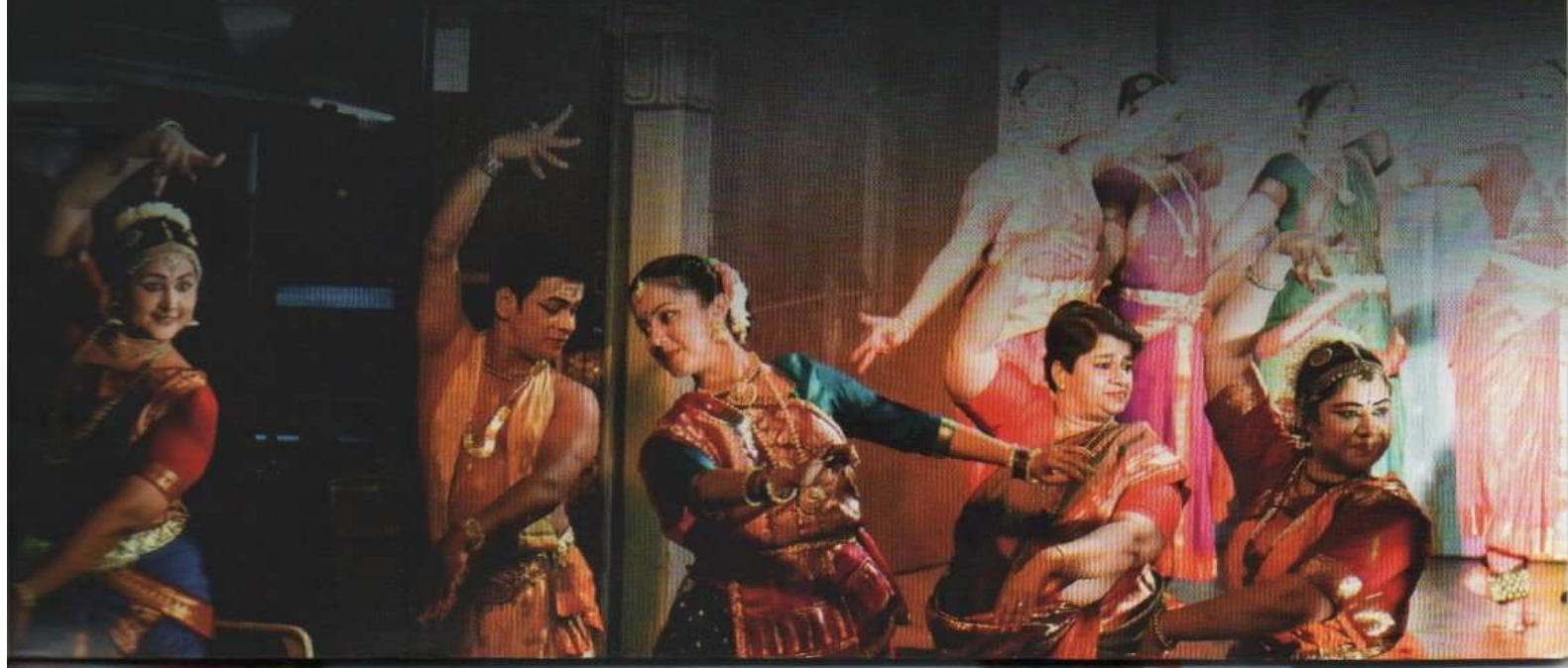
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PADMA DIVAKARAN

ADVOCATE OF SOCIAL CAUSES

Adv Padma Divakaran IRS (Retd) is a well-known senior Malayali personality who is a relentless social activist and works for the welfare of those who are in need of any assistance.



Lakshmi Venkatachalam

■ A respected figure, Adv Padma Divakaran has made Mumbai her home for more than 49 years. She is winner of many awards and recognitions conferred upon her by numerous associations but she carries her honours with dignity. Her serene smile has brought cheer to many hearts and she is a motherly figure to many who call her 'amma' only.

Adv Padma Divakaran is President of Bombay Keraleeya Samithi, Malad, since 2008 and under her guidance the Samithi has carried out many social, educational and other charitable activities. Several Malayalees who have excelled in their respective fields like education, literature, drama, sports etc have been honoured by the Samithi. Medical and eye camps have been carried out, sports and cultural activities have also been done under her leadership. On the cultural side, the Samithi has taken a keen interest in reviving Malayalam drama and has produced prize winning plays namely *Eepunya Bhoomi* (written by Rajan Thekkumala, and directed by Rajendran

Padiyur), and *Divyabali* (written by Paravur George and directed by Rajendran Padiyur). Padma Divakaran says senior dramatist K D Chandran has been a great source of inspiration for her to revive the production of Malayalam plays in the Samithi. And the Samithi gives its office space for drama rehearsals. Bombay Keraleeya Samithi Malad is one of the more active Malayalam Samajams of Mumbai and this is mainly due to its President Padma Divakaran. She gives the entire credit for its successful running to all the Committee members who work as one family.

She is Vice President of Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana and Director of Sree Narayana Guru Co-operative Bank. She is associated with several well known social organizations like All India Malayali Association (AIMA), Sharanalaya Cancer Trust, Tru Indian Information and Guidance Society, Sree Ramadasa Ashram and several other organisations and various temples of Mumbai.

Since her childhood Padma says that she has always wanted to help others. She was born in Omalloor in Pathanamthitta as the eldest of seven siblings to late VK Gopalan and Late Pankajakshi Amma. She was a bright student and did her schooling and college at Catholicate School and College in Pathanamthitta. Adv Padma recalls that she had secured very high marks in her PUC, but her father decided to discontinue her education



Padma Divakaran and her husband Divakaran, then and now



Adv Padma Divakaran with several awards that she has received



Padma Divakaran and her husband with their family members



Adv Padma Divakaran speaking at Madhu Nambiar's Book Release function. Seated are KD Chandran, Madhu Nambiar and other dignitaries on stage.



During the inauguration of Soorya Krishnamoorthy's Chayakkada Kathakal play at Samskarika Vedi Mira Road.



Book distribution to poor students by Bombay Keraleeya Samithi

due to financial reasons. Her college Principal and teachers came to her house and convinced her father to allow her to complete her graduation and she got a scholarship and completed her BSc in Physics and Maths from Kerala University. During her college days she represented her college/state during Republic Day Parade in 1966 in New Delhi. In fact after her graduation she was appointed as NCC Instructor and Tutor of Physics in her college.

But destiny had other plans in store for her. She completed her graduation in 1967. She got married in 1968 to Divakaran who was working in Naval Dockyard Mumbai and came to this city with her husband. Divakaran's parents are the Late Kesavan Velayudhan and late Gowriamma and his native place is Prakanam in Pathanamthitta. He is the eldest of six siblings in his family. The couple has taken care of both their family members.

Padma's first home in Mumbai was in the Naval Civilian Colony in Kanjur Marg and there were several Malayalees living there. She first got a job at ESIC. After six months she got employment at Income Tax Dept as UD clerk. She passed the Departmental examinations, was promoted as IT officer, then Asst Commissioner and retired as Dy Commissioner Income Tax (IRS Officer) in 2007 after a span of meritorious service in the department. During her tenure she has received several Appreciation Letters and awards from her Department for her dedicated and sincere work. During this time Padma studied Law and got her Degree



Medical camp organised by the Samithi and SNMS Malad- Kandivali- Borivli Unit

in Law (LLB from Mumbai University) and completed the two year LLM Course as well. From 2008 Adv Padma Divakaran has been appointed as Govt Counsel for the Income Tax Department to represent cases in High Court and since the last nine years she is working as Govt Standing Counsel for Income Tax.

Working for the poor and less fortunate has always been a part of her life. During her tenure in the IT Department she used to help persons who needed financial assistance for medical and educational expenses etc. Adv Padma Divakaran has helped financially many poor patients who were in need of heart operations. With the help of organizations like World Malayali Council and others, she has arranged funds for heart operations of poor people at Lilavati, Bombay Hospital and other hospitals in Mumbai. Padma Divakaran has extended educational assistance to deserving poor children to continue their studies, donated wheelchairs, helped cancer patients etc. But she is very hesitant to talk of her charitable activities for she believes, "My left hand should not know what my right hand is doing. I do not want to boast about my social work. Whatever society has given me, I believe I should return to society," she says.

Promoting culture is another passion of hers. "I owe a lot to the late Rajan Kadannappalli, who was President of Kandivali Malayali Samajam. He involved me in Mahakeralayam programme of Kandleeyam Kerala Sanghatana and ever since I have become involved in the cultural and social activities of Mumbai

Malayalees. I also owe a lot to Syed Mohammad (ikka) of Gramaratnam who brought me to the limelight," she says.

Adv Padma Divakaran has won several awards and honours. She has been bestowed FOMA Excellence Award (2015), Mahila Ratnam Award by *Jwala*, Daksh Nagarik Award from Daksh Police Times, Samman Chin for Charitable work from Mulund Shiva Sena, Woman Achiever Award from Pambungal Publications, Mumbai District Aids Control Society Award on the occasion of International Womens Day, etc. In 2016 she was honoured by Mira Road Malayali Samajam during its Silver Jubilee Celebrations and Ladies Wing Womens Day Celebrations. She has been honoured by Borivli Nair Samajam, Shiva Keraleeyam and by several other organizations and Samajams.

After working at the Naval Dockyard her husband Divakaran went to Saudi Arabia and worked for the Govt Port Trust at Dammam. Now he has retired and returned to Mumbai.

Both of them are interested in visiting religious places and travelling abroad for sight- seeing.

Padma and Divakaran have two daughters. The elder daughter Rakhi is a graduate and has a Diploma in Business management. She was working earlier in Pidlite Group. She is married to Sunil and she and her husband are active in the social field. Rakhi is Secretary of Borivli Malayali Samajam, the first lady to hold this prestigious position. Her husband Sunil is a businessman dealing with trading and insurance, and both of them are very active in Rotary Club and its social and charitable activities. They have a daughter Nikita who is studying second year BA and she is also an active member of Rotaract Club.



Padma Divakaran



Padma and Divakaran's second daughter Reshma is married to Hari an M Tech from IIT Mumbai who has his own advertisement Company and is guest Faculty at IIT Powai. Reshma, an MCom, who was working with ICICI Bank in a senior position, left her job after her children Harsh and Ved were born, but she did her MA and B Ed while at home. Harsh is now studying in Std IX and Ved in Std III.

Padma Divakaran says that we should never forget our roots. Whether it is a social function, cultural event, drama staging, dance/ music performance, Padma Divakaran is a part of the same, from Badlapur to Tarapur. She makes it a point to grace the occasion and attend the function. She wishes that all Malayalees should come under one umbrella and work

together and more and more women must come forward and work together for the betterment of society. "United we stand, divided, we fall," she says.

"Be happy and make others happy," she says with a gentle smile. ■

PREMJI

The Actor, Writer and Poet

-Satyanath

Premji was not much known for his literary skills but for his social reforms, political activity and acting. He was an actor par excellence, no doubt, but he was an excellent poet and dramatist.

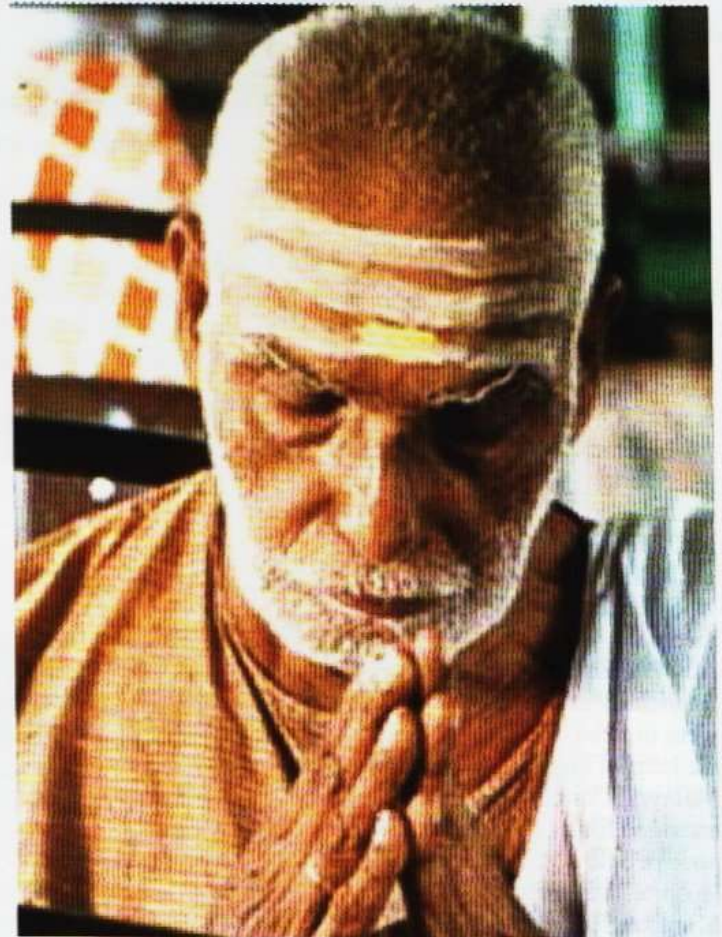
Premji was the pioneer of using visual media as a tool for propagating ideals. Cherukad (Govinda Pisharody) vividly remembered the sojourn of both of them to Kozhikode to prepare people of Kerala against the Japanese invasion during Second World War. Premji dragged Cherukad, a teacher by profession and took him from Trichur to Kozhikode with Rs.5 in his pocket. They met the comrades and came to know what was expected of them. They started with an empty pocket. Their scheme of things included printing a small book of songs (by Premji) against Japan and sell to the public to raise money for propaganda, organise dance forms such as Kummi, Kolattam, folk dances, Ottan Thullal (lyrics by Cherukad), Pathakam, Kathakali etc. Japan was to be portrayed as villain. Afterwards they wanted to return but they had only one and a half rupees between them. So they bought two tickets for Tanur. They decided to walk from Tanur to Tirur, meet some friends and borrow money for tickets to Trichur. They wrote the lyric for *Pathakam* before reaching Tanur. Premji had money equivalent to today's three paise and so bought two small cups of tea and proceeded to Tirur by foot. Next day they borrowed Rs.4 and reached their destinations.

Premji wrote enumerable songs for the propagation of freedom struggle, Communist party, labour agitations etc and a lion share of them remained unpublished.

Premji had written many poems and articles under the pseudo name Vanneri Savithri Antharjanam and those essays and poems stirred a hornets' nest in his community. He helped many upcoming poets in writing poems. Some of those young poets included K K Raja, Aattur Ravi Varma and Purayannur Chitrabhanu Namboothiripad. When K Damodaran wrote 'Paatabakki', Premji did the corrections to make it stage-worthy.

Officially only six books were printed under his name. *Rutumati* (play), *Nalkalikal*, *Premji Paatunnu*, *Sapatni*, *Raktasandesham* and *Mattamma* (last mentioned five are collections of poems).

Rutumati was written eight years after V T Bhattathiripad's *Atukkalayil ninnu arangathekku*. The latter was written against the social evils prevailing among the Namboothiri community especially among women and the play helped to a great extent to bring in changes. Yet there were a few regressive practices such as dropping girls from schools when they attain puberty. Since the boys and girls of Namboothiries were much older than other students in schools meant for other children, they were educated by special schools run by the Yogakshema Sabha. Yet when the girls attained puberty, they were forbidden from attending the school. *Rutumati* (The nubile maiden, 1939) was written against this practice and the inspiration came when the daughter of Premji's elder brother was forced to drop from the school because the hostel where she was staying was not equipped to handle girls of menstruating age. Premji protested against this



Premji in Piravi

and forced the Sabha to suitably modify the system. Kattumatam Narayanan, a well known drama critic, evaluated *Rutumati* at a higher pedestal over the VT's play, and regretted the fact that this play had only three stages. He rated Premji's role as the benevolent uncle in this play to that of Kanwa of *Shakuntalam*. He analysed the reasons and came out with the explanation that only Premji could do justice to that role while others could not carry that character on their shoulders. He recommended this play as 'worth reading.'

Premji's *Nalkalikal* is a collection of 44 poems. Those days most books carried a preface and dedication by the author and an Introduction by an eminent writer of repute. Prof S Guptan Nair wrote the introduction. He writes, "When Ottur Unni Namboothiripad, N D Krishnanunni and Thamarasseri Krishnan Bhattathiri write perfect quatrains, we may say they are traditionalists; but when young Yusuf Kecheri and Ramesan Nair write similar meaningful and flowing quatrains, can we call them the same? When Vailoppilli and Akkitham et al write beautiful rhythmic lines, none would dare to accuse them as



Premji exhibits *Ekalochanam*

opponents of modernism. We may argue for some time that metres and grammar are not imperative for poems. Nonetheless as Poet Tagore says, when the strings are tightly attached, the musical instrument produces the sweetest notes. Hence all world renowned poets are coming out with poems with proper grammar and rhythm." Citing a few examples from the book, he further writes, "...not only the meaning but also the musical notes of rhyming, conjunctions of several words into a single phrase besides the toughest attribute of rhyming a 'consonant' in the second place of each line with the same 'vowel', and further the repetition of the same consonant in the fourth line endear his poems to readers." Some extracts:

മിന്നിക്കൊണ്ടും കഷണിത്തല, വിസൃതതരം
 നെററി, നല്ലൂൾത്തെളിച്ചം
 ചിന്നിത്തത്തും മുഖം, തെല്ലിഴയലുടയ സം-
 സാരമാജാനുബാഹു,
 പൊന്നിന്നൊത്തൊരു മെച്ചിൻനിറമുടുവദർമു-
 ണ്ണാപദം കാലമേറെ-
 പ്പിന്നിട്ടാലും മറക്കാ ദശമവയസി ഞാൻ
 കണ്ടൊരാ നീണ്ട രൂപം! (കവിഗുരു വള്ളത്തോൾ)

വാസ്തവവർത്തം കവിയുടെ
 വാക്കിനെ പിന്നുണർന്നിടും
 വേലി നൂഴുമ്പോൾ നായിൻറെ
 വാലും പിന്നാലെ വന്നിടും.

ശ്രാവ്യമാകണമോ, കാവ്യം
 ശബ്ദസുന്ദരമാകണം:
 നാദമുണ്ടെങ്കിലേ നാണ്യം
 നാട്ടിൽ നാലാളെടുത്തിടൂ! (വാക്കും അർത്ഥവും)

Like the poets of the golden era of Malayalam poetry, Premji strictly followed the rules and regulations of the old guards but sometimes went beyond them. In the Preface of the book, he delves into poetry to thank Prof Gupatan Nair in three quatrains, the last of which is given below:

സുപ്രായമിരുൾത്തൊഴുത്തിലെഴുമെൻ-
 'നാൽക്കാലി'വൃന്ദത്തെയെസ്.
 ഗുപ്തനായർ പുറത്തിറക്കിയെഴുതും
 കോലാൽത്തെളിച്ചങ്ങനെ-
 തൃപ്തൻ ഞാനിതിനെന്തു നന്ദിയുരചെ-
 ഏയുണ്ടു ഭവാനോടു? നി-
 ക്ഷിപ്തസ്നേഹമഹാനിയേ, തദുചിതം
 നാക്കില്ല, വാക്കില്ല മേ!

Premji dedicated his work to the Akshara Sloka Parishad in the following quatrain:

ചേലില്ലാ ചെറു വർണ്ണത്തിനു; മധുരതര-
 സാര്യ സാരം ചുരത്താ;
 സ്ഖാലിത്യംപോലുമുണ്ടാം പദമനു മമ 'നാ-
 ല്ക്കാലികൾ'ക്കിങ്ങശേഷം;
 പാലിക്കാൻ വയ്യ, വില്ക്കുന്നതിനു;-മവയെ ഞാ-
 നക്ഷരശ്ലോകമാം 'ശ്രീ-
 കോലി'ൻ, മുമ്പിൽ സഭ്യോദരമിത, നടത-
 ഇളപ്പിട്ട-കിട്ടട്ടെ മോക്ഷം !

'Premji Paatunnu' (Premji sings), is written on the lines of Kabir verses. It contains 55 verses. An excerpt:

മർത്തുന്നു ജീവിതം പ്രേമ്ജി പാടീടുന്നു
 മത്സരമൊന്നാലേ മുർച്ഛ കൂടു.
 അല്ലെങ്കിലാദ്യമേ മുഷ്ടി ചുരുട്ടിക്കൊ-
 ണ്ടല്ലയോ മർത്തൻ പിറന്നു പാരിൽ
 ഒത്തിരിപ്പുണ്ടതിൽ പ്രേമ്ജി പാടീടുന്നു
 മർത്തുതൻ കർമ്മശക്തിയാകെ!

നികലേ നീചത്താലേ പ്രേമ്ജി പാടീടുന്നു നിന-
 കെൻകവേ! നാടിൻറെ നാദമുൾക്കൊണ്ടു പാടാനാവു.

Premji's 'Mattamma' is about one of his distant relatives and her turmoil in life. EMS Namboothiripad wrote the Introduction to this book at the poet's request. This was published in *Kumkumam Onam Special* (1985) when N V Krishna Varrier was its editor.

Premji had written Introduction to some books of other authors too. However unlike other introducers, his Introductions were in verses. An introduction to 'Bhujangaprayatam' treatise by Polpakkara Damodaran Namboothiripad had five quatrains. Its last is reproduced hereunder:

ക്ഷേത്രം തൊട്ടുള്ള പുണ്യസ്ഥലി കളിലമൃതം
 തേടിടും ഭക്തിപദ്യാ-
 യാത്രക്കാർക്കൊക്കെ മാർഗ്ഗക്ലമകലുവതി-
 നുള്ള പാഥേയമായി
 ആ ത്രയുന്തങ്ങനെന്മാരുലണെഴുതിയതാ-
 മീ 'ബ്ഭൂജംഗപ്രയാത'-
 സ്തോത്രവ്യാഖ്യാനമാത്താദരമി വനവർതൻ-
 മുമ്പിലർപ്പിച്ചിടുന്നേൻ.

Earlier days it was a practice to submit a Mangalapatra to persons on special occasions. In one such case, Premji submitted a Mangalapatra to Shri Anjam Namboothiripad on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday and it was written in a special way. The



Premji receives award from EMS



Premji and wife with grandchildren

last (seventh) quatrain was written in Rathabandham metre.

ശ്രീനാമമൊന്നാലാവോളം
 ഭീയാളും ഭരസാഗരം
 തൃഴഞ്ഞങ്ങശ്രമം പുകും
 എവെകുണ്ഠത്തിന്നുമപ്പുറം

			മൊ	ന്നാ			
			മ	ഭ	വ	ലാ	
	നാ	ളും	ങ്ങ	ശ്ര	സാ	വോ	
ശ്രീ	യാ	ഞ്ഞ	ത്തി	ന്നു	മം	ഗ	ളും
	ഭീ	ഴ	ണ്ഠ	മ	പു	രാ	
		തു	കു	പ്പു	കും		
			വൈ	റം			

The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th characters of the four lines downward and the 4th, 3rd, 2nd and 1st characters of the same lines upward (and also the fourth horizontal line) would read as

ശ്രീയാഞ്ഞത്തിന്നു മംഗളം

Only Prof A R Rajara Varma was earlier known to write similar quatrains.

When important events such as deaths of dear ones, he used to write quatrains in which the date of the event would be concealed in Kalivarsha tradition.

Alliteration

ഘനതതി മുടിയും മുടിയും
 വനജപ്പുവമ്പരന മിഴിയും മിഴിയും
 ജനമനമുലയും മുലയും
 നിനയായ്ക: നിനയ്ക്കിൽ ഹൃത്തുലയും തുലയും.

In the above quatrain, the last two words used in each line are the same but have different meanings.

He was close to poet K K Raja. When Raja recited his lines, Premji used to take them down. The poet would walk thinking about the next lines and before he composed them, Premji would complete the poem. Once Purayannur Chitrabhanu Namboothiripad wrote two lines of poem and left on the table. By the time he turned, Premji had completed the poem and also gave it a title, 'Sapatni.'

When Cherukad wrote 'Nammalonnun', Premji was not satisfied with its craft and started revising it. The play later turned a huge hit and Premji had an important role of Pangan Nair. After some time, Cherukad handed over all the rights of the play to him.

Premji as dramatist

Contribution of Premji to stage is enormous. Though he entered as an actor, he had several aspects. He corrected the plays written by V T Bhattathiripad, Cherukad, Ulhatttil Sankarankutty Menon et al, wrote lyrics, directed some plays, judged plays in competitions etc. All of them he did without expecting any remuneration.

The introduction of Premji into stage plays was quite accidental. When Premji was reading the proof of some play, V T noticed that he was really involved with the characters whose dialogues he was reading. V T told him, "It appears that you are enacting those roles. Your job is to read the proof; not enact it." In fact Premji was doing his job but unknowingly he got trapped in the character. V T noticed his ability to act and got him into his play *Atukkalayil ninnu Arangathekk*. Premji was then only 21.

It was staged in December 1929 in Edakkuni for the annual day of Yogakshema. Learning about its theme, the leaders of the Yogakshema denied permission to it citing the chanting of Vedas in the first scene could not be done as Nairs and other community members were also likely to be present. Then Premji declared that in such a case, it would be staged at Trichur on the same day for the annual of Yuvajana Sangham. Anticipating a depletion of audience, the leaders finally consented. After watching the first scene, Kanippayur Sankaran Namboothiripad who had a four anna ticket bought a one rupee ticket and came to the front row. After the third scene, Muthiringod Bhavathrathan Namboothiripad came to the green room and demanded a role immediately for himself. Since he could not be denied, Premji wrote a one line dialogue for him creating an instant character. Kaplingat Sankaran Namboothiri who earlier opposed the drama tooth and nail came forward and delivered the Samaveda mantram usually recited at the end of wedding ceremony, for the last scene of the play.

The role Premji enacted in this play was that of character aged 65. His acting was so natural that nobody suspected that the actor was Premji. After this play, he also acted in a few other plays related to social causes of community in general. 'Nammalonnun' (We all are one) written by Cherukad was one of the most successful drama in which Premji acted. According to Premji, he acted only in ten plays. Other plays were *Noorjahan*, *Shahjahan*, *Apphante Makal*, *Marhakkutakullile Mahanarakam*, *Rithumathi*, *Pattabakki*, *Chavittikkuzhachcha Mannu*, *Manushyahridayangal*, *Marthandavarma*, *Sakuntalam* and *Krishnakumari*.

He had several unforgettable experiences. Once after enacting the role of Pangan Nair in *Nammolonnun*, Premji was removing the makeup when a dark short person entered the green room. When Premji realised it was actor Sathyan, he could not believe his eyes. Sathyan embraced him and complimented him for his fine acting. Later, they acted in several films and formed a mutual admiration society.

When Premji became Gandhiji in K P Kesava Menon's *Mahatma*, he was inundated with congratulatory notes from all over. The then union minister of Education Prof Humayun Kabir wrote to Menon, "From the photograph it seems that Shri Bhattathiripad was able to offer a very presentable personation of Gandhiji."



Cherukad



P J Antony



Sathyan



Sheela

When *Nammolonnu* was staged, P J Antony was enacting Pangan Nair's son Sankunni, a leader of farmers. Premji as Pangan Nair entered the stage and saw his son sitting with landlord Namboothipad. He got angry with him and thrashed him besides catching him by throat and pushing him out. After curtain was down, Premji saw Antony nursing his throat. When Antony was asked what had happened, he replied, "You should realise that you are only acting." Premji felt bad and regretted his unwise deed. He decided not to be carried away by emotions during his acting.

Once poet Vallathol asked Premji to take the role of Noorjahan but he was not in agreement. The poet told him, "You don't have to be a woman but only to act like a woman. That is the substance of acting." Premji consented and created history.

Premji treated Vallathol as his guide and Guru Kunchu Kurup as his teacher. He acknowledged Kunchu Kurup's role in helping him to make Noorjahan quite meaty. After seeing Noorjahan going mad on stage, Vallathol jockingly asked Premji if he was really mad.

On the sixtieth birthday of Vallathol, Premji became Kanwan of Kalidasa's Sakunthala and Kalamandalam Ramankutty Nair evaluated it as "...what a performance! Real Kanwan himself!"

Premji was very particular about the makeup, attire, dialogue and diction of the character in film or drama and would insist on amending if anything was not proper. Rutumati was a play with Namboothiri characters but each character had distinct intonation in dialogue delivery based on their education, lineage etc though they were all had the typical Namboothiri dialect.

Premji, the movie actor

Premji was really a movie lover and used to evaluate them in his diary. The names of films such as *Nallathanka*, *Sasidharan* (P K Vikraman Nair), *Yachakan* (M P Manmathan), *Chechi* (Ms Kumari), *Neelakkuyil*, *Rarichan enna pouran* etc were appearing in his diary.

Premji's first film was *Minnaminungu* (The firefly, 1957 directed by Ramu Kariat) and the last was *Piravi* (Birth, 1988, directed by Shaji N Karun) for which he was given Bharat Award. His important films are *Mootupatam* (The veil), *Thacholi Othenan*, *Pakalkkinavu* (Daydream), *Mintapennu* (Silent girl), *Sindooracheppu* (Vermillion cist), *Jagadguru Aadi Sankaran*, *Thrishna* (Thirst), *Yagam*, *Patippura* etc. In all he acted in 46 films.

During the selection of best actor in 1988, Om Puri was a strong contender for that award. The North Indian lobby was unanimously favouring Om Puri. Their objection to Premji was that a dubbing artiste was used for Premji. C Radhakrishnan

who was in the panel of jurists, asked others, "You have given Urvashi award twice to Sarada fully knowing that she also borrowed voice on both the occasions. Is the sweet voice of Mukesh the reason for the good acting of Raj Kapoor? Is it not the best acting when the actor shows all expressions

using the controlled movements of facial muscles without resorting to sound?" The resistance became subdued before these arguments.

Piravi also obtained awards for its director Shaji N Karun. Besides the national award, Premji also got the award of the state government and Filmfare for this role.

Sathyan was his favourite actor. When Pottekkat's *Mootupatam* was filmed, Premji was chosen as Chathu and Sathyan and Sheela were to act as his children. 'Sathyasmarana' is a poem written by him after the actor's death.

അഞ്ചുപിത്രമേ ഞങ്ങളൊന്നിച്ചു നടിച്ചുള്ളൂ;
 പിഞ്ചുപുൽത്തണ്ടിനെത്ര മഞ്ഞുതുള്ളികൾ വേണം?
 അത്ഭുതനടനായൊരദ്ദേഹത്തിനോടൊത്തീ -
 യല്ലനും സെറ്റിൽക്കേറാനൊത്തതേ മഹാഭാഗ്യം
 കാഴ്ചയിലെനിക്കേറും പ്രായമേരത്തോ വെറും
 വേഴ്ചയെക്കരുതിയോ, സ്നേഹശീലനദ്ദേഹം
 'ചേട്ട'നെനല്ലാതെന്നെ വിളിക്കാ; വിളിയതു
 കേട്ടഭിമാനത്താൽഞാനെത്ര കോൾമയിർക്കൊണ്ടു!
 ഇരുളാണ്ടൊരെന്നുള്ളിലിന്നുമേ കടാതെ നി -
 ന്നുരുകിക്കത്തുന്നുണ്ടാ ദുഃഖത്തിൻ മെഴുതിരി.
 എങ്ങനെയോരും ഞാനാ നിത്യയാവനനിന്നു
 മെൻ കരൾത്തടത്തിലും കണ്ണിലും ജീവിക്കുമോൾ?

Actress Sheela was first signed in Malayalam for *Mootupatam*. When Premji learned that she was the granddaughter of Kuriyedathu Savithri (Thathri) who was excommunicated after *Smarthavicharam*, he was sad for her as well as proud. In *'Oru Tharathinte katha'* (Story of a Star), he writes about her.

പെണ്ണിനെ മണ്ണായി കാണുന്ന നമ്പൂരി
 കണ്ണുമടച്ചു ജപിച്ചിരിക്കെ,
 കൊണ്ടാടി ഗുരുമസ്സൗന്ദര്യമാധുര്യം
 കണ്ടാസ്വദിച്ചുപോയ് ഭാഗ്യവാന്മാർ.

Premji strongly believed that woman should herself choose her path and he was proud of Thathri for the life she had chosen. He gives a totally different interpretation to the reason behind the birth of Sheela like this:

തുച്ഛനൊരനന്ദൻ തൻ ധർമ്മപത്നിയായ്
 വെച്ചും വിളമ്പിയും തേവാരിച്ചും
 ജന്മം തുലയ്ക്കേണ്ട ദുര്യോഗമാണുനി -
 ന്നമ്മുത്തയ്ക്കുണ്ടായതെന്നിരിക്കിൽ
 മറ്റൊന്നായ് തീർന്നെന്നെ നിൻകഥ; നീ വെറും
 മുറ്റത്തെ മുക്കുറ്റിപ്പുവായേനേ!

He saw the birth of Sheela as a positive result of *Smarthavicharam*.

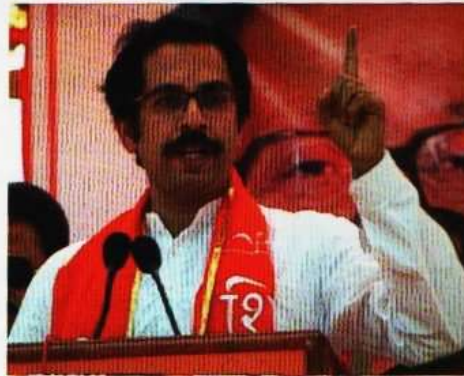
Movie Thacholi Othenan had Sathyan, Ambika, Sukumari, Kottayam Chellappan, S P Pillai, Adoor Bhasi, P J Antony et al and he drew character sketches of each one of them in beautiful quatrains. Mammooty, Nedumudi Venu, C I Paul had the fortune of being his subject on other occasions. ■

Resurging BJP and diminishing Congress: Shiv Sena still leads

When the results are out, the outcome was beyond belief. The allies of two decades went their own separate ways either of overconfidence or of self-confidence. During the pre-poll talks, Shiv Sena was not willing to yield not more than 60 seats to BJP while the latter wanted to contest from 110 seats. The big brother SS was never willing to concede even the seats it allowed in 2012 elections. The objective was not to allow the ally enough number of seats to secure even half the strength in the House if they win all the seats they contested lest its own hierarchy would be disturbed. It was the same case with the Congress and NCP front.

The election was held for ten corporations including regions of Greater Mumbai and Thane and BJP gained 8 of them on their own strength. In Mumbai, BJP came second to Shiv Sena but very close breathing on its neck. The difference is only two seats. Till noon on the counting day, Shiv Sena was leading in many wards and crackers started bursting and sweets started being distributed. Soon the picture changed. BJP started threateningly closer by evening but both the parties are short of 21 to 23 seats for an absolute majority. It was surprising that the early partners still needed support from other parties, an unlikely prospect. Will Congress support either of them to enable them to be the ruling group? Quite unlikely! Even if NCP and MNS extend support, they would still need some more support from the 'other' group but the price to be paid would be enormous. Voters of Mumbai have provided a hung verdict but are hopeful. In politics anything is possible.

However in Thane BJP was pushed down to the third position with 23 seats while NCP retained the same number of seats of last term with 34. Here AIZMIM opened its account by winning from 3 wards in Mumbra region. MNS drew a blank this time though it had won from seven wards



Uddhav Thackeray



Devendra Fadnavis

last time. Influential NCP leader from Thane Devram Bhoir had four candidates from his family and all of them lost the poll.

Pre-poll scenario

During the pre-election days, the voters must have felt the political leaders have left their brains at home. The President of Shiv Sena was vigorously attacking the Prime Minister Modi and Chief Minister Fadnavis politically and personally. He said demonetisation was the worst disaster that could have happened to India since Independence. CM Fadnavis was a little more careful in selecting his words. He was restrained in personal attacks but blamed the Sena for corruption in BMC and also for non-transparency in their dealings. If the past partners happen to unite again to form the controlling group in BMC, that act would be tantamount to the faith reposed by the voters in their respective party leaders. There were murmurs to the effect that many supporters of BJP did not vote in

the previous elections as they did not like the alliance partner but this time they came out in large numbers to support their favourite party. The same could be said about the Shiv Sena support also. If these statements are true, the losers are Congress and NCP. In the last BMC election MNS had given a signal of becoming a threat to Shiv Sena but now it came in the open to show that it is not even a force to give a symbolic fight.

Since almost all parties fought the election on their own might, one thing became clear: they all came to know where they are standing.

What next?

One interesting aspect of this election was that in one ward (Ward No.220 containing Mumbadevi) there was a tie between the BJP and SS contestants, Atul Shah a former MLA and Surendra Bagalkar a corporator respectively, as both of them polled 5,946 votes each. A recounting proved the fact again and a lottery was drawn, the result of which went in BJP's favour.

Four of BJP candidates lost for less than 100 votes. The losers were Kamla Raj Purohit, Santosh Kelkar, Jaisal Kothari and Mahesh Parkar. They were short of 17, 40, 84 and 87 respectively. While Santosh Kelkar lost to Congress, all others lost to SS candidates. Similarly sitting Sena corporator and leader of the house Trushna Vishwasrao of Sena lost to Congress by 60 votes.

The highest margin of votes belonged to BJP candidate Pravin Shah of Ward No 15 (Borivli). He defeated his rival SS candidate by 19,580 votes.

While the Sena's seat count increased from 75 in the last election to 84, BJP's seat count has become three fold.

Congress and NCP have seen a steady decline over the last three elections. This could be the worst fate nationwide parties could encounter.

Across the state

Barring BJP, all other parties have

BMC Polls Current and past

Parties	2017	2012	2007	2002	1998
BJP	82	31	28	35	26
Shiv Sena	84	75	84	98	103
Congress	31	52	71	61	49
NCP	9	13	14	12	NIL
MNS	7	28	7	NIL	
Others	14	28	23	21	43
Total	227	227	227	227	221

Gain and Loss

Corp.	Seats	BJP	SS	Cong	NCP	MNS	Others
BMS	227	82	84	31	9	7	14
Thane	130	23	67	3	34	0	3
U'Nagar	78	32	25	1	4	0	16
Pune	152	92	10	9	36	2	3
PI-CH	128	67	7	0	33	0	21
Solapur	102	49	21	14	4	0	14
Nashik	122	66	35	6	6	5	4
Akola	73	48	8	13	5	0	
Amravati	87	45	7	15	0	0	20
Nagpur	145	97	3	27	1	0	17

obtained fewer seats across Maharashtra. Shiv Sena has increased its tally in Mumbai, Thane, Ulhasnagar, Solapur and Nashik from the last election while retaining the same number of seats in Akola. BJP has seen substantial increase in its seats across all corporations. While NCP obtained less number of seats in all corporations, in Thane it could retain its number while Congress got much less number of seats. MNS could win some seats in Mumbai (7), Pune (2) and Nashik (5) and lost all its seats in other corporations. In Nashik, it had even had the administrative wheel in its hand.

While retaining its hold on Akola Municipal Corporation, BJP wrested the Amravati from the Congress and it has absolute majority in both the corporations.

Mumbai Special

Shiv Sena never had such a shock as of now. When R K Laxman was alive, Bal Thackeray had drawn a cartoon wherein he invited Pramod Mahajan who called on him for negotiations, to a small stool while he kept the two big chairs for himself. Though BJP is a national party, SS always treated it as its 'little brother' and Uddhav Thackeray never left a chance to taunt it whenever it lost a small election. On February 24, TOI published another cartoon depicting Aditya showing his father a picture of a tiger on a piece of paper, indicating SS has been reduced to a paper tiger. Now Uddhav has to play second fiddle to BJP though it had two seats less than his own party to retain power in BMC.

MNS was showing some promise in the beginning and most of Mumbaikers were thinking that MNS would be a better alternate to SS but the present election proved that picture wrong. It is wiped out in most of the corporations

and zilla parishads.

Sena's finding fault with the demonetisation drive of BJP did not seem to have found any response from the masses whereas BJP's restrained propaganda had attracted the imagination of the masses. Other parties could not exploit the drive of demonetisation to their advantage. If Mumbaikers could not find fault with demonetisation, how other towns and villages could do so? The cry in support of the 139 people who are alleged to have died while standing before the banks did not yield any results.

Political parties have to find more subjects and issues to attract the imagination of the voters.

Malayali presence



T M Jagadeesh



Sreekala Pillai

Two Malayalees are elected to BMC this time. They are Sreekala Pillai (BJP) from Goregaon and T M Jagadeesh (SS) from Dharavi. Jagadeesh is the first Malayali as a Shiv Sena corporator. He hails from Irinjalakuda and a shakha pramukh. He won with a majority of 680 votes. Sreekala is from Attingal and it is her third contest to BMC. She was defeated in earlier contests. She secured a majority of 5000 votes over her nearest rival from Congress. Her father R R Pillai was a corporator earlier.

Presumptions

When Uddhav Thackeray spurned the offer of MNS, he did not realise that

the Maharashtrian votes would split and thereby reduce the number of seats his party might gain in the polls and thus would not be adequate to get a majority. It was a decision based on over confidence. Had MNS been with SS, the poll picture should have been emerged differently.

Writing against BJP and its leaders in 'Saamna' while sharing power with them at the central and state levels kept the neutral voters away from the Sena.

Though BJP contested 16 seats less than SS, its vote share was only 1% less. While SS polled 28.32%, BJP and MNS polled 27.32% and 7.74% respectively. Congress and NCP shared 15.95% and 4.85% each.

Since the 2012 elections, there were many cross overs among political parties and the gainer was BJP. Many aspiring leaders left their parties and migrated to BJP. BJP fielded 18 of the immigrants and 14 of them got elected. The defeated were very recent migrants from Congress and SS. Majority of the immigrants was earlier Congress men. However those crossed over to Shiv Sena did not find acceptability from the voters.

Though Majlise Ittihadul Muslimeen (MIM) opened their accounts now, they to their chagrin found more Muslim candidates from Congress won than from them. MIM being a Hyderabad based party, Congress might have been more acceptable to the local Muslims. To split the Muslim votes SP also had some candidates.

Stop Press

One independent and two rebels who won the election to the BMC have joined SS to boost their strength to 87. There could be more migrations by the time this magazine reaches you. ■

The Advent Of The Sizzling Sambar



K R Narayanan

■ During our school days, in the then Princely State of Cochin, the boys had many nicknames,

based on their castes, family names, the trade of the family or some other reason. The Tamil Brahmins or the "Pattars" (as they were called) too had a couple of nicknames, of which I remember only two now. One was *Chaala Pattar* and the other - or the more universal one - was *Sambar*. The non-Brahmins had their own reasons for these nomenclatures.

To call a Brahmin a Sardine Eater (*Chaala Pattar*) was blasphemous and the biggest insult to him, in those days; but calling him as the one who subsists on Sambar was a lesser degree of insult.

Nevertheless, the term *Sambar Eater* indirectly hinted that, like their Sambar, they too were not the sons of the soil. Both the Sambar and the Brahmins were said to have migrated from Pandya Desam, the Tamil speaking world, and hence both are not considered *strictly* Malayalees.



Fundamentally, Sambar is just a vegetable soup, made of tamarind (*Puli*) and pigeon peas (*Tuvar Dal*) and every state in south India has had its own versions of this curry, even before the birth of Sambar.

However, by the turn of the 20th century, opines an expert on culinary habits of the South Indians, most Malayalees had become Sambar Eaters keeping aside their own *Pulissery, Kaalan, Olan, Aviyal, Erisseri* and the like.

Sambar has occupied an important place in the Indian cuisine and has become very popular as *The Indian Curry*

the world over. Most of the countries - except perhaps some interior cold regions of Europe - do sell Sambar in their eateries and hotels. Also, many international airways, today, serve Sambar onboard their flights.

In spite of accepting Sambar and rice, as their staple food, Malayalees carried with them a very wrong notion that Saambar was a *Pandi Koottan*, brought by the Brahmins from their homeland in Tamil speaking regions. This gave an undue credit to the Tamils as the inventors of Sambar.

The Tamils, on the other hand, too are very proud of their Sambar, which they feel, was their own contribution to the entire world. It was here that all had gone wrong.

If we were to believe the historians of Sambar, the credit for inventing this

universal Indian curry would not go to the Tamils. I did not have the guts to speak out this truth so far, lest I should earn the wrath of the Ammas, Annas, Thambis, Akkas and Thozhars of our neighbouring state. It was very accidentally that I bumped onto the history of Sambar and learnt that its origin stretches back to the era of Maratha rule in Thanjavur of Tamilnadu.

Fundamentally, Sambar is just a vegetable soup, made of tamarind (*Puli*) and pigeon peas (*Tuvar Dal*) and every state in south India has had its own versions of this curry, even before the birth of Sambar. The *Pulusu* of Andhra, *Puli* or *Vathal Kuzhampu* of Tamilnadu, *Huli* of Karnataka, *Pulinkari* of Kerala were some of them. But, none of them could achieve a global recognition like the great Sambar.

The historians have recorded that the first edition of today's Sambar came out in the 18th century, through an accident, from the palace kitchen of the Maratha rulers' representative Sambaji, in Thanjavur. Sambaji was a very good connoisseur of food and a very good cook as well and was very fond of a Maratha dish called *Aamti*. The palace kitchen used to cook *Aamti*, with the savoury



Kokam [*Garcinia indica*: The dried sour apple] from Maharashtra, and the special type of Chillies from the Gomanthak (Konkan) region. Being a good cook himself, Sambaji enjoyed cooking the *Aamti* himself.

Once, when he was about to cook *Aamti*, the stock of *Kokam* had exhausted and the new stock had not yet reached the palace. Hence, the smart palace cook, somehow, manipulated the situation by persuading the King to try a different variety of *Aamti*, with the locally popular Tamarind [*Tamarindusindica*: *Puli*], for better taste. Sambaji liked the proposal of the Palace cook and set on the invention of a new type of *Aamti* with the Tamil land's Tamarind. This was the first ever preparation of the popular Sambar.

Sambaji liked and relished the new *Aamti* and served it in the palace feast. The people in the palace too enjoyed the new type of *Aamti* and named it Sambar in honour of its inventor Sambaji Maharaj.

Evolution is the law of nature and Sambaji's "new version of *Aamti*" was no exception to this. In the course of time, many new ingredients like vegetables, asafoetida, chick peas and the like were added to the invention of Sambaji and the Thanjavur Brahmins' popular Sambar was born.

If this is true, there is no reason why we Mumbaikars should not proudly say, *Amchi Sambar*!!? ■



Rev. Dr. Hermann Gundert

RENDERED EXEMPLARY CONTRIBUTION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF MALAYALAM LANGUAGE



V N Gopalakrishnan

■ Rev. Dr. Hermann Gundert was a German scholar, linguist and lexicographer. He came to Kerala as a missionary but he is remembered today mainly for his

contributions to enrich Malayalam language. Dr. Gundert has been held in high esteem among linguistic experts in Kerala for the high scholastic aptitude exhibited in his works. As a linguist, he was fluent in 18 languages including Hindi, Malayalam, Bengali, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil besides English, German, French and Italian. Christian missionaries came to Kerala for proselytizing and for spreading their religion. For this purpose, they studied the local dialects and in the process, they converted the local populace to Christianity. However, these missionaries contributed a lot in enriching the cultural firmament of Kerala.

Dr. Gundert's name has found a place in the history of Malayalam journalism as well. He started the first formal Malayalam newspaper titled *Rajyasamacharam* in 1847 from Illikkunnu in Thalassery, though it was quite evangelical in tone. He launched another newspaper titled *Pashchimodayam* as an easy way to spread the Gospel and for missionary works. Frederick Muller was the editor of the newspaper. It was his intention to publish a newspaper that influenced the need to standardize grammar and text. Through his paper, he introduced people to Western life, about English folklore, French Revolution etc. which were unknown to the local people.

Dr. Gundert had mastered the Malayalam language in eight years, by mixing up and conversing with the people in markets and other public places. He also compiled a Malayalam grammar book titled *Malayalabhaasha Vyakaranam* in 1859 and the first Malayalam-English Dictionary in 1872.



Dr Hermann Gundert

His dictionary has been described as "monumental" in a review of the work on Dravidian languages. He structured the grammar of the Malayalam language and compiled the dictionary which is still in use today. Taking into account his contribution to Malayalam language, Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan has stated: "If Ezhuthachan is considered to be the Father of Malayalam, then Dr. Gundert should be accorded the title of "Stepfather" (*Valarthachan*)."

Though missionary work was his main objective, Dr. Gundert possessed a passion for Malayalam language and literature. Some of his important literary works include *Polucarp Charitam*, *Smaranavidya*, *Manushyahrudayam*, *Christusabhacharitam* etc. He also

translated John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* into Malayalam titled *Sanchariyude Prayanam*. He had more than fifty works to his credit; which included diverse disciplines such as religion, history, science, language, literature, etc.

The books penned by him from 184 till 1879 include: *Keralolpathi* (Origin of Kerala), *Pazhancholmala* (String of Malayalam proverbs), *Paathamala* (First school text in Malayalam), *Keral Pazhama* (Antiquity of Kerala), *Malayalarajyam* (Geography of Kerala), *Vajrasooji*, *Muhamadeeya Charitram*, a translation of the *Bible, Old Testament* from Hebrew and *New Testament* from Greek. The archives of information he collected from Thalassery are kept in the Tübingen University, Germany and were collected and compiled by noted linguist Dr. Skaria Zacharia which are known as *Thalassery Rekhakal*.

Hermann Gundert was born at Calw in Stuttgart, Germany on February 14, 1814 as the third child of Ludwig Gundert and Christiana Enslin. Ludwig was Secretary of the Bible Society who started a magazine named *Stuttgart Mission Magazine*. Young Hermann learnt the first lessons in printing and publishing from his father. He studied Hebrew, Latin, English, and French at the famous Latin school at Maulbronn and mastered these languages at a very young age. He was proficient in music as well.

Following his studies at Maulbronn,



Gundert Bhavan at Illikkunnu

Hermann joined the University of Tübingen in 1831 where he studied history and religion. He began translating great works including Sophocles' *Antigone* and *King Oedipus*. Thanks to the influence of his father who was a votary of the religious movement and with a fascination for mysticism, Hermann Gundert secured a doctoral degree in philology from Tübingen University and later a Doctor of Philosophy from Switzerland.

On October 2, 1835, he embarked on his journey for the missionary work in Calcutta. Basal Mission Society was his motivation for coming to India. Basal Mission was a protestant mission established in 1815 with its headquarters in Switzerland. India was an important centre of its activities and the Mission started at a time when caste discrimination was at its height. While travelling in the ship, he mastered Bengali, Hindi and Telugu. In July 1836, he reached Madras instead of Calcutta. Staying at Tirunelveli and Chittoor, he learnt Tamil and published a book in Tamil. In July 1838 he married his co-traveller Julie Dubois at Chittoor.

For spreading the Gospel among people, Dr. Gundert joined the Basel Mission and went to Mangalore for missionary work. On his way to Mangalore, he passed through Thiruvananthapuram and had an audience with H.H. Sree Swathi Thirunal, the then Maharaja of Travancore. It was here, perhaps he heard Malayalam for the first time. This musical language that uses a lot of Sanskrit and Tamil words attracted Gundert very much and, not only did he learn Malayalam but also became an authority in a short span of time. Though, the couple reached Mangalore in 1838, they moved to Illikkunnu near Thalassery in April 1839 where he lived for 20 years.

The house where they stayed came to be known as Gundert Bhavan. It was from here that he made great contributions to Malayalam language and literature. His long stay here saw him producing voluminous works in Malayalam. All his children including the mother of Hermann Hesse, the Nobel laureate and novelist were born here.

Dr. Gundert learned Malayalam from Ooracheri Gurukkanmar from Chokli, a village near Thalassery. His teacher helped him to compile the first Malayalam Dictionary as well. Some of



Statue of Dr. Hermann Gundert at Thalassery

the words in this dictionary are not much in use today. Nonetheless, this is a priceless treasure for those who are concerned with the studies on the development of the Malayalam language. It was his biggest contribution wherein words and their meanings were documented for the first time. Dr. Gundert not only looked at Sanskrit or literary words, but incorporated common words used by the locals and dialects specific to fishermen, adivasi communities in his dictionary.

Apart from the early inscriptions found on copper and stone, Dr. Gundert traced Malayalam to the *Rama Charitam*, a poem predating the Sanskrit alphabet. It was he who introduced the punctuation marks, full stop, comma, semi colon, colon and question mark into Malayalam language.

He was posted in Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh, Nagercoil, Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi. From 1849 to 1856, Dr. Gundert was posted in Chirakkal near Kannur where he stayed till he was transferred to Mangalore in 1856. In 1857 the British colonial administration appointed Dr. Gundert as a School Inspector of Canara and Malabar region for two years.

According to the linguist Dr. Skaria Zacharia, it was Dr. Gundert who helped fix the word Malayalam as the name of the language. Before his time, the language had multiple names such as *Keralabasha* and *Malayalanama*. Through his publications, Dr. Gundert was able to popularize the word Malayalam and made it the standard name for the language.

A serious case of dysentery caused him to return to Germany in 1859, where he slowly recovered. There he managed the Calw Publishing House

from 1862. His monumental work on Malayalam-English Dictionary was undertaken after his return to his native place and it took ten more years to complete.

The Basel Mission sent Dr. Gundert to Calw to assist Christian Gottlob Barth there. The last phase of his active life was dedicated to Oriental linguistics. While in Germany, he published four publications including a children's newspaper in German. Due to illness, he was bed-ridden in 1890 and on April 25, 1893, he passed away in Calw at the age of 79.

The University of Tübingen, Germany has embarked on a massive project to digitise and make available online for free the legacy of Dr. Hermann Gundert to the language. The corpus of nearly 80 manuscripts, 150 printed works and some palm leaf manuscripts of Dr. Gundert available with the University runs into some 42,000 pages. Dr. Skaria Zacharia, edited Tübingen University Library's Malayalam manuscript series comprising *Payyannur Pattu*, *Pazhassi Rekhakal*, *Thacholipattukal* etc.

A statue has been erected in Thalassery in June 2010 in his honor for his exemplary contribution for the advancement of Malayalam language. The bungalow in which he used to live for 20 years in Illikkunnu came to be known as Gundert Bhavan. It has a unique design and architectural beauty and is constructed in the form of a watch tower and is currently the home of the Nettur Technical Training Foundation.

The Gundert Foundation School started in 1996 in his honour, brings modern education at minimum expenditure to students of all castes and creeds. Dr. Gundert's bi-centenary celebrations were organized in Kerala when his contributions to Malayalam language and culture were remembered. A seminar titled 'Gundert's World' was organised by the Information and Public Relations Department and the District Institution of Education and Training in Thalassery on March 4, 2015 which was inaugurated by historian M.R. Raghava Warrior.

His literary works, even now, are frequently referred to by Malayalam research scholars. He was truly a great human being, an erudite scholar whose name will be associated with rich Malayalam literature for years to come. ■



2016 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PULSES



Dr A P Jayaraman

■ Pulses have something surprisingly in common with pornography. United States Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart used an expression "I know it when I see it". He was describing the difficulty of an intelligent definition of hardcore pornography. We face a similar situation while dealing with the definition of pulses.

What are pulses?

If you ask the best agricultural scientist the simple question what pulses are, most often you will first get a frown and then a long answer. "Pulses are annual leguminous crops yielding between one and twelve seeds of variable size, shape and colour within a pod, used for both food and feed". You will be nonplussed.

Lengthening the meaning of pulses and shortening their range you may get an insight into the difference between legume and pulses. Legume refers to the plants whose fruit is enclosed in a pod. Legumes represent a vast family of

plants including more than 600 genera and more than 13,000 species. Pulses are part of that great legume family.

With lingering dissatisfaction, further clarification will follow quoting Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations putting limits on the term 'pulses'. Pulses are crops harvested solely for dry grain and exclude those harvested green for food which are vegetables. You will be reminded that you should not mistake crops used for oil extraction and sowing purposes as pulses. You will be served with the information that groundnut and soybean are nonpulses. They are oily unlike pulses.

Pulses Zindabad

United Nations declared 2016 as the International Year of Pulses. The objective is to heighten public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production aimed towards food security and nutrition. People will be encouraged to make connections throughout the food chain that would better utilize pulse-based proteins. Encouragement for higher global production, better utilization of crop

rotations and a smoother supply chain is being orchestrated all through this year across all countries.

Pulses India

Archaeologists have discovered traces of pulse production around Ravi River signifying that we have a date with pulses over five thousand years ago. We are the world's largest producer and the largest consumer of pulses. We buy pulses from Pakistan, Canada, Myanmar, Australia and the United States. The global pulse market is estimated at 60 million tons.

We also do research in pulses at Indian Institute of Pulses Research Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh. The Nuclear Agriculture Division of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai has developed high yielding varieties of blackgram.

Grams galore. Walk into any *Palacharakkukada*, you will find the colourful world of grams. Black gram (*Phaseolus mungo*), Green gram (*Phaseolusaureaus*), cow pea (*Vignasinensis*), Bengal gram (*Cicer arietinum*) and so on. Fourteen pulses are cultivated across India from Kerala to Kashmir.

We have twenty six million hectares

of pulse and. This is nearly one third of the global pulse cultivation area. We have one fourth of world pulse production. We need more pulses to consume than we produce and about four million tons are imported every year. There was a golden time three decades ago we had a per capita availability of sixty grams. This has plummeted to thirty-odd grams. Pulses were orphans in our Green Revolution.

Pulses contain about twice the amount of protein found in whole grain cereals like rice and wheat. Most people including vegetarians get their proteins from pulses. Pulses are a low fat source of protein, have low glycemic index and high fibre content. They contain both soluble and insoluble fibres. They provide important vitamins and minerals. Some of the key minerals in pulses include: iron, potassium, magnesium and zinc. They are also particularly abundant in B vitamins; including folate, thiamin and niacin.

Eating pulses as a replacement to some animal protein helps limit the intake of saturated fats and increases the intake of fibres. Pulses are included in all 'food baskets' and dietary guidelines. The World Food Program includes sixty grams of pulses in its typical food basket, alongside cereals, oils and sugar and salt.

Encouraging awareness of the nutritional value of pulses can help consumers adopt healthier diets. In developing countries, where the trend in dietary choices tends to go towards more animal based protein and cereals, retaining pulses is an important way to ensure diets remain balanced and to avoid the increase in non-communicable disease often associated with diet transitions and rising incomes.

Long Live Pulses

Pulses are part of a healthy, balanced diet and have an important role in preventing illnesses such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. The World Health Organisation estimates that up to 80% of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes and over a third of

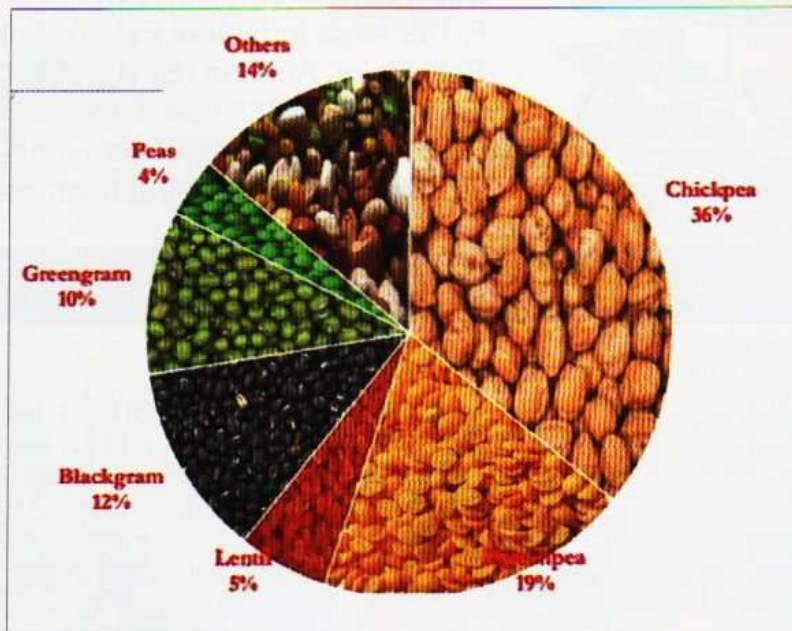
cancers could be prevented by eliminating risk factors, such as unhealthy diets and promoting better eating habits, of which pulses are an essential component. Soluble fibre in pulses helps to decrease blood cholesterol levels and control blood sugar level. Insoluble fibre helps with digestion and regularity.

Germination is a process that involves the soaking of pulses overnight. The water is then drained and the seeds are tied in a loosely woven cotton bag and hung. Water is sprinkled twice or thrice a day and sprouts usually appear within 6-8 hours. Vitamin C is synthesised during germination. Riboflavin, niacin, choline and biotin are increased. Starch

digestion of proteins. Haemagglutinins combine with haeme and thus destroy haemoglobin. Cooking destroys these toxicants.

Broad beans contain some toxic substances. When these beans are consumed raw a disease called favism occurs. This disease is characterized by haemolytic anemia. Since humans do not consume broad beans raw, they are not likely to suffer from favism.

Kesari dal was a suspect pulse. Medical opinion was that the dal might cause lathyrism leading to paralysis. Diamino-propionic acid in the dal is considered responsible. It was banned in 1961 by all state governments except West Bengal. In the 1970s, farmers growing Kesari faced stringent action such as burning of standing crops and seizure of cattle. Recently, Indian Council for Medical Research lifted the ban. Shantilal Kothari, a 73-year-old microbiologist fought for Kesari dal. He claims that if farmers are allowed to cultivate the dal, farmer suicides will reduce. This dal was so popular in India, that it was accepted as a form of bit coin among farmers. The banned dal was available across markets, and is used to adulterate other pulses.



Our pulse production Basket

is converted into sugars. It reduces the anti-nutritional and toxic factor in pulses. Dormant enzymes get activated and digestibility and availability of nutrients is improved. Minerals like calcium, zinc and iron are released from bound form. Sprouted pulses can be eaten raw, since germination improves taste and texture.

Some studies show that pulses are linked to long-lived food cultures such as the Japanese, the Swedes, and the Mediterranean people. Further enquiry as to the effect of pulses on improving longevity is in progress.

Beware of toxins

Some toxic substances are naturally present in certain pulses. These include trypsin inhibitors and haemagglutinins. Trypsin inhibitor interferes with

Poor Man's Rich Food

If you walk into a western supermarket you will find that pulses are prominent by absence. The share of food use in total utilisation of pulses in the developed countries is less than 25 percent. In developing countries it is over 75 percent. Economists often feel the pulse of a country by measuring the amount of pulses it consumes. Higher consumption of pulses in lower income countries is noted.

Dry peas, are used as feedstuff. Some 25 percent of pulse total use goes to feeding animals, namely pigs and poultry. Complementing animal feed with improved varieties of pulses has shown to significantly improve animal nutrition too, yielding better livestock, which in turn supports food security.

Pulses are locally adapted and can be grown by local farmers for their own

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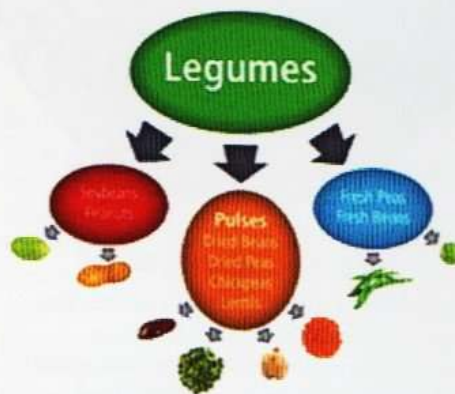
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nutrition as well as for sale, which is important to improve food security. They are highly accepted crops, which can keep well in storage.

Pulses, because of their role in improving sustainability, notably through soil management, also impact food security. Soil degradation is a major threat to food security in many areas. Africa is particularly impacted by soil degradation, yet pulses are part of traditional diets and often grown by small farmers. By improving the crop patterns using pulses, farmers can improve their yields and limit the long-term threat to food security that soil degradation represents.

Black beauty

Blackgram or *Uzhunnu* is one of our important *kharif* pulse crops. It is consumed in the form of *dal* (whole or split, husked or unhusked) or parched. In north India, it is the chief constituent of *papad* and also *bari* (spiced balls) which makes a delicious curry. In the south, the husked 'dal' is ground into a fine paste, allowed to ferment and is mixed with rice flour to make *Idli*, *Dosa* and *Uthappam*.



Pulses form a subset of legumes

It is also valued as a green manure crop. Its dry stalks along with pod husk forms a nutritive fodder for cattle. The plant has deep root system, which binds soil particles and prevents soil erosion.

Kerala pulses

Six decades ago pulses occupied a prominence in the cropping system of Kerala. In 1960-61, it was cultivated in an area of 44120 hectares with a production of 17550 tons though the productivity was low, just 398 Kg/ha. By 2000-01, the pulse area drastically declined to less than 7000 hectares. By

2012-13, the pulse area dropped down to 0.14 per cent of the net sown area.

I discovered to my sheer delight that my district Palakkad is attracting the attention of agricultural scientists to grow pulses. They are going to do this in 250 hectares. Among the eight varieties of blackgram are *Syama* and *Sumanjana*. *Kanakamony* and *Krishnamony* cowpeas will flourish here.

Palakkad town has the unique culinary blend on Kerala and Tamilnadu. We get Marxian *Parippu vada* and the Brahminical *Uzhunnavada* with its enriched variant *Thayirvada*. Blackgram is the stuff of *Papadams* both big and small.

Music from pulses

Pulses have been incriminated in producing music, that audible obnoxious and embarrassing gaseous release from the rear. Analytical chemists have laid bare the composition of wind gas: nitrogen, oxygen, methane and traces of smelliest hydrogen sulphide. Gastroenterologists assure us that gut bacteria does it across species and removing pulses is no solution. ■

Dr K Balakrishnan

Natural Health Practitioner

From spondylosis to sciatica, from Slipped disc to groin pain, from spondylololthesis to nerve compression, Dr Balakrishnan has a remedy for all these and several other ailments. He treats patients with neither medicines nor surgeries but with a natural and positive approach that has cured most of his patients to lead a normal life later.

Dr Balakrishnan is the savior that many patients turn to when allopathic doctors and surgeons have given up hope. He has successfully treated hundreds of men and women who suffer from spinal disorders, neck and back pain, asthma, migraine and several other illnesses. The number of letters of thanks he has received from his recovered patients are testimony to his commitment to curing the sick.

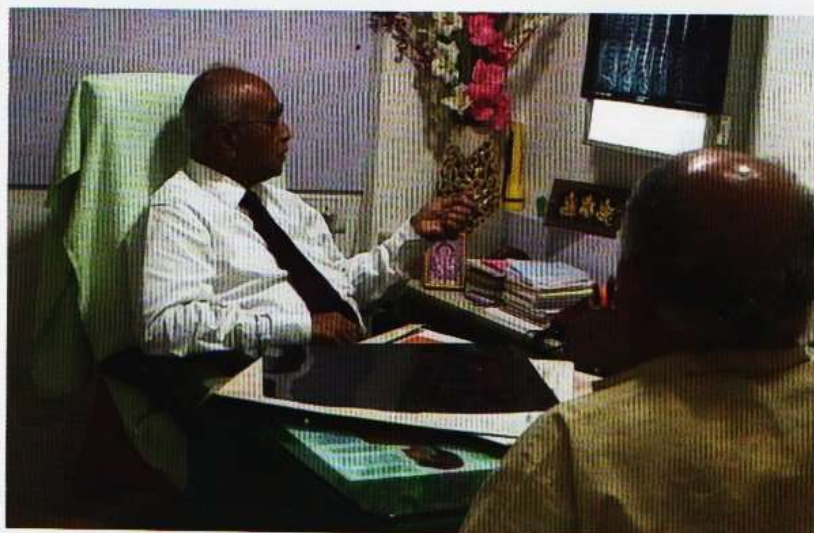
Dr Balakrishnan is a naturopath and chiropractor. He heals with his magical fingers. His treatment as chiropractor involves manipulating with his fingers the soft tissues without any medicines. After a few sittings the patient finds himself relieved of his pains.

As a chiropractic practitioner, Dr Balakrishnan considers that good health is the natural state of being and he looks at the patient on the whole to see what may have gone wrong and then looks for corrective measures.



According to him, the spine and its nerves represent the epicenter of our physical well being. All our pains and aches are related to spinal disorders either due to long years of abuse and

general wear and tear or accidents or are genetic. He is also an advanced pranic healer, yoga acharya, hypnotherapist and drugless practitioner. His treatment involves no drugs nor surgery. In fact



The Doctor consulting the a patient

patients who did not find any improvement after surgery and long usage of drugs come to him and find that they have been cured with his mode of treatment. At seventy plus, Dr Balakrishnan is a busy person treating scores of patients at his clinic, earlier at Kandivali till May 2012. Now his clinic is located at 16 Ravi Kiran Bldg, near Mongini's Cake Factory, Off New Link Road in Andheri (West).



Dr Balakrishnan with his family

Dr Balakrishnan is a firm believer of yoga and pranic healing. He advises yoga also for his patients. According to him yoga is not just asanas and breathing exercise. It is 'a restrained modification of mind itself', in his own words. "Many disorders can be overcome by yoga, exercise, timely treatment, disciplined lifestyle and with proper advice and guidance,"

Even as a child Balakrishnan wanted to become a doctor. Born in Thalasseri to late Gopalan Kalliyat and late Madhavi, he completed his PUC in Kerala and armed with knowledge of typing and shorthand he came to Mumbai in 1962 in search of a job. His father was in Mumbai. Young Balakrishnan got a job at the Atomic Research Centre as a typist. Later he joined a leading commercial firm Chika

Ltd. In the meantime, his passion to study medicine did not wane and he studied several courses in Alternative Medicine. He also started practising alternate medicine. He was working as Executive Director of Swift Couriers Pvt. Ltd when he resigned from the job to start off as a full time practitioner of holistic and naturopathic healing.

Dr Balakrishnan did intensive courses in Naturopathy, Chiropratic medicine, Yoga and hypnotherapy. He soon acquired a number of degrees and certificates from a variety of naturopathic centres of study. He is Associate Member of Naturopathy Society of India, All India Alternative Medical Practitioners' Association Member, Fellow of Rural Health

Society, Member of Ayurvedic Medical Service of India, Member of National Association of Drugless Practitioners and Member of Indian Forum for Alternative Medicines and Holistic Health Science.

Dr Balakrishnan says that the secret to a healthy life lies in following a positive approach to life. That itself is half the battle won. He himself gets up early in the morning, practises yoga, avoids coffee and tea and is a strict vegetarian. Dr Balakrishnan's tips to a healthy life are simple and easy to follow. One should sip lukewarm water on getting up first thing in the morning, practice yogic exercises, Asanas and breathing exercise daily and always be positive in thought and deed.

"Learn to listen to your body and get acquainted with the body's wisdom. It knows what is best for your well being," Dr Balakrishnan sums up.

Dr Balakrishnan's wife is Usha who retired from NPCL and they have a son Avnash married to Rupali. The couple have a girl child by the name Yashica. Avnash is from the Printing fraternity having his own business since the year 2000. His wife Rupali is a Sr. Manager Partnerships with IDOBRO, a social enterprise which deals with Woman, Social and Green Initiatives. Dr Balakrishnan and Usha have a daughter Nisha who is working for a five star hotel as Computer System Assistant. ■

Most Common Spinal Disorders

Many things can cause back, neck ache and other spinal disorders, not all of them obvious or proved. It can be caused due to mechanical, chemical and psychological reasons. Mechanical causes include accidents, falls, lifting, bad posture, soft beds, saggy sofas, overweight etc. Nutritional deficiencies, excessive heat and cold, electrical shocks, bad food combinations, allergies would come under chemical causes. Psychological issues like mental tension and stress, overwork, boredom, grief, marital, work dissatisfaction can also lead to backache. By modifying or changing our lifestyle we can overcome spinal problems to a certain extent.

Yoga, any form of exercise, even walking, is good to keep our backs strong and supple. A flat firm bed, upright seats and chairs, keeping body weight under control, taking up a hobby and taking time to relax all - these would go a long way to lead a back pain free life.





Kerala Tourism **INNOVATIONS and EXPANSIONS**

Considering the uptick in inbound tourism from Mumbai, the Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala organised B2B Roadshows in Mumbai on February 7. The aim of the roadshow was to attract city's leading travel agents and tour operators, and showcase to them the best of 'God's own country'.

The delegation from Kerala was led by Shine KS - Tourist Information Officer, Department of Tourism, Govt of Kerala and comprised of major players from the state's Tourism and Trade industry. Besides forging fresh collaborations, the roadshow introduced new initiatives, experiences and attractions that Kerala has in store for visitors.

Kerala Tourism: The story so far...

The Marketing Initiatives for the year 2016-17 were formulated and executed based on the keen understanding of the unique appeal that 'God's Own Country' holds for its visitors. The cutting-edge marketing measures adopted by the government have elevated the state to the top-tier of 'must visit' destinations around the

world. There has been a remarkable increase in the arrival of tourists within a single year as a result of the various initiatives implemented by the Government. In September 2016, foreign tourist arrivals showed an uptick of 5.61% compared to that of September 2015. The domestic tourist arrivals figure in September 2016

increased by 6.01% compared to that of Sep 2015. Foreign exchange earnings for the year 2015 was Rs. 6949.88 cr. which recorded an increase of 8.61% over the previous year. Total revenue (direct and indirect) from tourism in 2015 is Rs 26689.63 cr. showing an increase of 7.25% over the previous year's figure.



Shine K S speaking on the occasion



Cultural performance on the occasion



the two millennia-old spice route that links the south western coast of India to Europe, has received a boost with the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) pledging support to the venture.

In September, Kerala's local spice markets amazed those who normally amaze people with their culinary genius. 17 teams of chefs preparing for the Spice Route Culinary Festival scoured Kochi's traditional markets to pick up ingredients for the competition. They effused about how thrilling the sights, smells and sounds of the market were; even likening it to 'arriving in paradise'.

The festival itself unfolded on a high note. Leading chefs from 15 countries dazzled the crowds with the most exotic and delectable dishes inspired no doubt by the historic Spice Route. Each team was an ambassador of their respective country's culture and cuisine; collectively they gave the ambitious Spice Route Revival Project a global platform and springboard.

The four-day celebration came to a close with the prize distribution the French team taking the biggest honours, with duos from Egypt and Thailand also making the winner's list. Giving a boost to exponents of local cuisine, top teams in the 'Kerala Chef' competition were also felicitated.

Kochi Muziris Biennale

Kochi Muziris Biennale is an international contemporary art festival that has rendered Kerala the tag 'Land of Biennale'. The state tourism department allotted a whopping Rs 7.5 crore to

New Initiatives To Attract Tourism

Green Carpet Initiative to spark off community involvement.

Launched in September 2016, the Green Carpet Initiative focuses on a 10-point agenda intended to give a facelift to select tourist destinations in the state. The initiative is testimonial to the acknowledgment that concerted efforts are needed to ensure security, cleanliness, hygiene, and scientific waste management methods, apart from offering unique experiences. The initiative emphasized on the need to spark off community involvement in tourism development in the state.

On the trail of the Spice Route

The Spice Route Revival Project is a key initiative undertaken by the state government. Kerala's endeavor to revive and promote, through tourism,



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promote the third edition of the Biennale. The event is a stellar example of community participation in developing the state's tourism sector. The Biennale helped to create a unique economic zone during the time of crisis due to demonetization, when the state faced a dip in tourist arrivals.

Other Noteworthy Projects...

Kerala Tourism has come out with a unique nature-based soft adventure holidays program NATVENTURE. The idea behind this is to use key tourism properties like Wildlife, Hill Stations, Beaches, Backwaters, etc. and to explore the possibilities of adventure activities they offer. Kerala Natventure activities include Trekking, Camping, Rock Climbing, Jungle Tour, Wildlife Safaris, Bird Watching, Cycling, Kayaking, Canoeing and Paragliding.

Virtual Reality Kiosk at the Indira Gandhi International airport brought to life the backwaters of Kerala and offered a unique experience to its visitors. A two-minute film watched with a VR headset transported the audience to a Kerala houseboat floating in serene backwaters of Kerala. The VR 'experience site', the latest promotional and marketing initiative of Kerala Tourism, has attracted much attention since it went operational and has reinforced the fact that Kerala remains at the forefront of leveraging technology for tourism promotion.

A new campaign, Home of Ayurveda was also launched to promote Ayurveda through all media. 'Bekal' was introduced as a new destination in North Kerala. From a seasonal tourist option, Kerala was elevated to an all-season destination through a successful Dream Season campaign launched during the off-season.

Keeping up with the Virtual World...

In a short span of time, Kerala Tourism has made a mark in the digital world. Its Facebook page has 12.8 lakh followers, the largest figure for any tourism board in India. Besides this, Kerala Tourism has 44,400-plus Twitter followers, 6000-plus Instagram followers, 500-plus Pinterest followers and 700-plus foursquare followers. There are around 23,000 subscribers for Kerala Tourism's official YouTube Channel and more than 250 articles have been published on Kerala, Backwaters and Ayurveda in guest blogs.

Kerala Tourism's website, which attracts a huge quantum of visitors, has been translated into various Indian languages including Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Kannada and Telugu, as well as foreign languages like Dutch, Italian, Portuguese and Swedish. The new website was launched recently with a fresh look providing increased

accessibility and detailed information with over 1500 pictures and 3000 videos.

Awards and Accolades

Kerala Tourism has bagged a number of national as well as international awards. On the global stage, it made its presence felt at ITB Berlin, winning the Golden City Gate Award (Print Campaign), Best Family & Best Value for Money Destination, etc. More recently, it annexed two gold awards at the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) awards for its trendsetting marketing initiatives.

A stand-out international accolade was the 'Best Stand Feature' at the World Trade Market, London. The showpiece display, themed around Kerala's fabled snake-boat races, included spectacular snake-boat replicas as well as video and images of a 'vallam kali'. The pavilion wowed visitors and judges alike; one of the latter remarking that it made them "want to go to Kerala just to see the action".

Within India too, Kerala Tourism was a prominent winner, returning from the prestigious National Tourism Award with a rich haul. The string of innovative measures helped it sweep three of the six marketing categories for states. Two more awards including one for Responsible Tourism (RT) and seven awards won by its trade partners swelled the kitty to 12. ■

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BEACHES OF KERALA

Blessed with a long coast line of about 600 km, in South Western India, lapped by the blue waters of the Arabian Sea, Kerala has a number of beautiful beaches that are the tourists' delight.

There are beaches lined with coconut palms, rocky promontories, and bordered by fine sand along Kerala's coastline. Here are details of a few of them: So pack your bags and go to one of them this summer. Since Kerala is a tourist's destination, facilities of all kinds are available in these places and you can come back with lingering sweet memories of an unforgettable holiday.

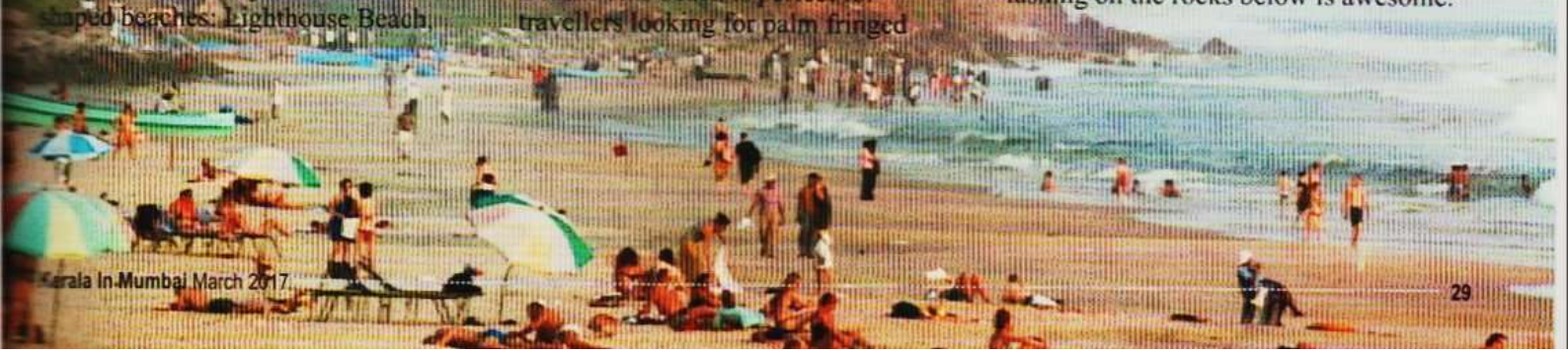
Kovalam Beach

Golden sands, miles of shimmering sea, rocky promontories constantly caressed by the sensuous surf and brilliant sunshine, Kovalam is a beach destination worth staying for a couple of days.

It is the most famous beach in Kerala. Since 1930 it has been a popular one among the international tourist destinations. About 16 kms from the capital city, Kovalam is easily accessible from Thiruvananthapuram. It compasses three adjacent crescent shaped beaches: Lighthouse Beach,

Eve's or Howah Beach and Ashoka Beach. In the early days Kovalam was a little fishing village. Today many resorts have come up offering facilities of international standard. There are accommodation options to choose for different budgets and many shops offering handicraft items, restaurants catering to different palettes, ayurvedic treatments and spas, in short all the trappings of a popular beach destination. It also offers adventure activities like snorkeling, catamaran rides, sunset viewing, bicycle riding on the beach etc. The three beaches are separated by rocky outcrops and bordered by swaying coconut palms. The Lighthouse beach is the most popular one and gets its name from the Vizhinjam Lighthouse that juts out high above the coconut fronds from the Kurumkal Hilltop. It is located at the southern part of Kovalam and a rocky headland. Edakallu separates Eve's or Howah Beach from the Lighthouse Beach. This beach is perfect for travellers looking for palm fringed

serene stretches of sandy shores. In the early morning hours, it is a beehive of activities with fishermen setting out for sea, chanting and singing in their local language to the rhythm of the sea waves. From here, you can get the majestic view of sunset and after the sunset, the calm cove of waters in the beach provides a visual charm of moonlit nights. The Hill that separates Howah Beach from Asoka Beach houses the Government Guest House and the charming Halcyon Castle. The Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi of Travancore constructed her beach resort, Halcyon Castle, here towards the end of the 1920s. Thereafter the place was brought to the public eye by her nephew the Maharaja of Travancore Chithira Tirunal, the last ruling Monarch of Travancore. Detour past Kovalam junction to land on Samudra Beach which is to the north of Ashoka Beach. One has the option to walk along the sea-wall too. The sight of the waves lashing on the rocks below is awesome.





Veli Creek where the sea and backwaters meet.



Varkala Beach



The Poovar and the Arabian Sea Beyond

Ashoka Beach

Ashoka Beach is in continuity with the Samudra beach, which happens to be the most secluded beach in Kovalam. Geographically a large promontory separates this part from the more crowded southern part of Kovalam. The absolute calm and the almost virgin quality of the beach is the reason why you'll find a number of ayurvedic resorts in the area. Apart from an occasional fisherman or a couple of villagers, Ashoka Beach doesn't see much crowd, which makes it a perfect spot for a quiet getaway.

Kovalam means a grove of coconut trees and true to its name the village offers an endless sight of coconut trees.

Places to visit in and around Kovalam

Vizhinjam: A fishing village 2 km south of Kovalam, Vizhinjam is a natural port and one of the busiest fishing harbours poised to become the biggest shipping port of the region in the future.

Vizhinjam Marine Aquarium: Located near Theatre Junction, the Aquarium houses a rich treasure of marine wealth, the most significant being Image pearl production technique by which a mould of any shape made of shell cement is implanted into the pearl oyster and a pearl in the shape of the mould would be ready in 2-3 months.

Chowara: 8km south of Kovalam, Chowara is another fishing hamlet with many picturesque spots. The Chowara Ayyappa temple atop a hill offers a spectacular view of the sea below, the Analoth Matha Church and Azhimalathara Beach are situated here.

Shankumughm Beach is adjacent to the Thiruvananthapuram airport and displays the gigantic *matsyakannika*, a 35m long sculpture of a mermaid apart from a star shaped restaurant, and a traffic training park for children. Akkulam River and Veli Veli Tourist Village are popular tourist attractions here.

Poovar Beach: 2 km south of Kovalam, is another spectacular but lesser known beach, situated close to the Neyyar river estuary. A trading port

in its early days, today Poovar is another popular tourist destination and has many ayurvedic resorts in its vicinity that also offer private beaches in their locations.

Beaches in Varkala

Varkala about 45 kms from Thiruvananthapuram is another seaside destination with red laterite cliffs rising majestically from its coastline.

Papanasam Beach: About 10 minutes walking distance from Varkala city Papanasam beach is fringed with these red laterite cliffs. Atop the cliffs there is a natural spring that is believed to have curative properties. Papanasam meaning 'redemption from sins' is a holy beach for believers who consider a dip in the sea here a holy ritual. The Janardhana Swamy Temple a century old tunnel and Nature Cure Centre are situated close to the beach.

Kapil Beach and Backwaters is about 8 kms north of Varkala and 53 Kms from Thiruvananthapuram. A confluence of sea, river and backwater this secluded and picturesque spot is breathtakingly beautiful.

(To Be Continued)



BIG PORTIONS TO THE RICH AND SMALL PIECES TO THE POOR



P.R. Krishnan

■ Unlike previous occasions, the atmosphere in parliament and the country was highly surcharged when finance minister Arun

Jaitely presented his fourth union budget this time for the year 2017-18. It was because (a) the government advanced its presentation from the last working day of February to 1st of that month, (b) the opposition had insisted that the budget be brought after the assembly elections in the five states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarkhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa, (c) the terribly adverse effects surfaced in the country due to demonetization of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 currency notes and (d) the demise of a longtime central minister and member of parliament E Ahmad on the previous day. Clearly, the government's motive behind preponing the budget was that its sops will help BJP to gather more votes in the elections.

The total expenditure estimated in the budget for the year 2017-18 is Rs. 21.47 lakh crores. This was Rs. 20.14 lakh crores for the year 2016-17. Thus, the increase is less than 7 percent. This is very nominal. Viewed from the likely inflation in the economic scenario and the GDP growth estimated at 6.5% to 6.75% this cannot be termed as stimulus at all. The expenditure amount of the union government for the year 2017-18

is 12.7%. This 12.7% was 13.4% for the previous year 2016-17. It is thus clear that there is a reduction in the GDP. This will have adverse effect in all sectors of economy. The budget says that out of 125 crores people of India, only 1.5 percent i.e., 1.9 crores pay income tax. But the budget is silent about how more people could be brought into tax system.

There are many reforms proposed in the budget. The most important one in that series is doing away with the 100 years long practice of a separate budget for railways. That has this time been clubbed with and merged in the general budget. But the budget does not show extra trains having been added on long routes for any part of the country. Nevertheless there is all indication for large-scale privatization of this key transport sector. Another reform carried out is abolition of Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB). As a result, whatever control the government was having on foreign investors will no more be there. However, the budget has made an allocation of Rs. 64,900 crores to build up highways. There is also a provision of Rs. 27,000 crores to build rural roads. This is good. But the fact remains that what was planned in the last year is only half competed.

The budget emphasizes the government's plans to privatize public sector industries. On the basis of 2014-15 estimates of union government, there are 235 public sector undertakings

(PSUs) spread over different parts of the country. Some of them are in Kerala. There are more than 13 lakh employees in these establishments. On an average, they make Rs. 2,81,634 crores profits. The government gets Rs. 47,229 crores in the forms of tax. The state governments also get a good share of this income. The budget proposals indicate that the government is in a hurry to handover the assets of their public undertakings to the open market investors through privatization. Last year the government had sold out assets worth Rs. 450 million from PSUs. This year the budget is targeting to sell out assets worth Rs. 720 million.

The promise made by Modi government was creation of 2 crores additional jobs every year. This has ended with just only a 1.5 lakh jobs in 2015-16 in this vast country where youth run from pillar to post for jobs. Based on 5th annual employment unemployment survey, a report released by PTI and published in news papers dt. 16th September 2016, the urban unemployment rate in India was 5% during 2015-16. In terms of figures this is 6.25 crores whereas unemployment rate for women as per Labour Bureau findings is 8.77%. The same report further reveals that 77% of the households have no regular wage earning persons in the families. The budget proposals in the matter of employment generation do not inspire confidence.

The most commonly used word after

demonetization of 500 and 1000 currency notes on 8th November 2016 is digitization. This is being projected to prevent black money dealings and to show transparent transformations in money transactions. The fact is that in interior India several people might not have even seen 500 and 1000 rupee notes during their life time. They live on exchange of agricultural products. Their selling and buying is on small denomination currencies. The other side of reality is that there are 259.3 million illiterate people in India above the 15 years of age. This is apart from the fact that crores of people in different activities do not have bank accounts.

The Prime Minister had portrayed the demonetization scheme as a surgical strike on black money, corruption, terrorism and counterfeiting. He claimed this step will improve the economy. These calculations have been proved wrong. What resulted was economic slowdown and heavy job losses. In that, the poor were worst hit. Lakhs of people engaged in farming activities and other wage earning jobs for livelihood suddenly became jobless, desperate and penniless. Semi starvation became wide spread in villages and in urban slums. Migration labourers engaged in farming sector and construction activities began returning to their native places. The cooperative banking network system which is integral part of rural economy became motionless in all states and union territories. This resulted into a big loss of more than Rs. 1.5 lakh crores. Reports of cattle deaths began appearing every day as they could not be fed. Selling and buying of animals stopped and cattle markets began presenting desert look.

The budget does not contain any proposal for compensation for the families of 139 people who died while standing in unending queues for withdrawing cash from banks. The recession set in motion on account of this disastrous decision still continues. Even then there are no rehabilitation measures proposed in the budget for those suffering from the debacles of

currency ban. The budget is totally silent about minimum support price for agricultural produce. There are no steps mentioned to improve the procurement arrangements of the agricultural produce. News papers and channels have on 18th May 2015 reported that the farmer suicides in India during last 20 years due to indebtedness were more than 3 lakhs. As per National Crime Record Bureau, 3000 farmers have committed suicides in India during the last 3 years. In that, Maharashtra tops the list with 1417 suicides till October 2016. Three fourth of this period is under Modi regime. Hence, to say that this budget is farmer friendly is deceptive.

Agriculture is the backbone of

and Maharashtra. These changes are brought without any consultation with Central Trade Union Organizations and also in a dictatorial manner. The alterations proposed in the labour laws are against the standards set out in the International Labour Organization (ILO) Charter which India has accepted. Such retrograde steps are also contrary to Human Rights Declaration adopted by United Nations Organization to which India is a signatory.

The budget has made an allocation of Rs. 48,000 crores for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. (MGNREGS) This was Rs.38,500 crores for the previous year. There are also marginal increases in the allocation for some other central



Indian economy. The Swaminathan Commission had recommended minimum support price (MSP) for crops above 50 percent of the cost of production. The BJP had accepted this in its election manifesto and assured that this recommendation will be implemented. Yet the budget reveals that this has been ignored. Presently, the minimum support price for crops is far below even the cost of production. Hence the claim that the budget promotes agriculture is equally false.

The budget has made a special reference to labour law reforms. This is meant not for improving the labour legislations but to cut down the protective provisions in them. This began first with the BJP ruled states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat

schemes like Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) Mid-Day Meal, ASHA etc. But considering the high cost of living, this is quite low. The budget has made a provision of Rs. 2700 crores as Maternity Assistance for women. In India there are 80 million inter districts migrant workers and 60 million interstate migrant workers. A significant proportion of them are women. They are poorly paid and are forced to lead horribly miserable life. No protective measures suggested for their welfare and safety in the budget. This apart, the government has not shown any inclination to increase the national minimum wage for unorganized and unprotected workforce despite the 7th Central Pay Commission Recommendation to fix Rs. 18,000/- as

compulsory minimum wage in the central government services.

Neither the Prime minister, the finance minister nor the RBI governor has revealed how much black money has been recovered after notebandi declaration on 8th November. Similarly the government has not disclosed information about the amount of black money used for terrorism connected activities. Likewise there is no disclosure in the budget about the enormity of counterfeit currency operations. The government has also not furnished any information as to what extend high denomination currency notes have been recovered. There is also no disclosure regarding the amount of counterfeit notes having been legitimized. The only disclosure made by the finance minister is that 98 percent of the demonetized currency has entered into the banking system. This means that much black money has been allowed to be made white. This establishes the fact that demonetization has been resorted to enable the black money holders to make them white. Hence claims that demonetization was

for elimination of corruption remains unconvincing. Instead the government should have taken recourse to implementation of Justice Wanchu Commission report. The fact is that neither the UPA governments nor the previous NDA Governments or the present Modi government have acted upon the recommendations of Wanchu Commission on parallel economy.

As per a finding recorded by CBI director Anil Sinha and updated by the PTI on 2nd March 2016, the non-performing assets, i.e loans taken by industrialists from nationalized banks are more than Rs. 3 lakh crores. This is exclusive of interest. The budget is silent on recovering these amounts. Another point to be noted in this context is non-payment of direct tax by the business tycoons. As per Annexure 10 to the budget, the accumulated unpaid direct tax is to the tune of Rs. 6.59 lakh crores. There are no measures proposed by the finance minister in the budget to recover this huge amount from the defaulters. This shows the class mentality of the government towards the business and corporate

sector. Similarly there is no word in the budget about what steps the government proposes to bring black money hidden in foreign banks.

Kerala ignored

The assurance of establishment of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) for the state has not been kept. Instead Gujarat and Jharkhand have got them. There are also no allocations made for investment in infrastructure sector in the state. Likewise, no new projects in the central sector finds place in Kerala. This is the case with railways as well. There is no word about Coach Factory in this budget, though it was assured earlier. There are no allocations made for expansion of Kannur and Karipur Airports as well. This discrimination and neglect is political because Kerala is under LDF rule.

A cursory analysis of the budget thus makes it clear that while major portions of the benefits have gone to the rich and wealthy, only small pieces have been given to the poor and the deprived. ■

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CELEBRATIONS GALORE



Prince Vaidyan felicitating T S Radhakrishnan



T S Radhakrishnan felicitating R S Naman

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF KERALA IN MUMBAI AND RAAGALAYA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AND EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Raagalaya and Kerala in Mumbai celebrated its 13th and 7th anniversary respectively on Sunday 29th January 2017 from 7.00 pm onwards. Popular Music Director T.S.Radhakrishnan was the recipient of 13th Raagalaya Achievement Award. As part of Kerala in Mumbai anniversary celebrations, well known Mumbai Malayali personalities who have achieved excellence in their chosen field of expertise were felicitated with Kerala in Mumbai Achievement Award 2017 along with bouquet and shawl. This year's Awards were bestowed on Dr. Gopakumar Nair, P R Krishnan, R S Naman, Mrs. K G Menon, Upendra Menon, Paul Parappilly,



Felicitations to P R Krishnan, Mrs K G Menon and Upendra Menon



Felicitations to K Venugopal



Daughter Karthika Nair receiving award on behalf of Gopakumar Nair.



Son K R Radhakrishnan receiving award on behalf of Rajendran Padiyoor.

Rajendran Padiyoor and K Venugopal. All these personalities have been featured in Kerala In Mumbai. The award function was followed by a grand musical evening by T S Radhakrishnan, PV Vijaykumar, Madhu Nambiar, Baburaj Menon, Soumya Ayyappan and Deepa Tyagarajan. Well known Mumbai Malayalees like S R Pillai, Prince Vaidhyan, D R Nair, Balachandran Vellody, Vijayakumar (Host Group), Balachandra Menon, C R Unny, A N Shaji, Thomas Olickal, Prakash Padikkal, Dr. P J Aprain, C P Krishnakumar, Swami Dayananda Saraswati of Sree Ramadaasa Ashram and several others attended the event. Ashish Abraham compered the evening's programme.



D R Nair receiving award on behalf of Paul Parappilly.



Release of 7th Anniversary Issue of Kerala in Mumbai



Section of Audience





WINNERS OF RAAGALAYA MUSIC COMPETITION



Murali (Flute) being honoured



Ashish Abraham (Compere) being honoured

Group	1st Male	2nd Male	1st Female	2nd Female
A	Vaisakh S Namboothiri	Eric John Palathingal	Keerthana U. Nair	Vamik K Vipin
B	Saijith Unnikrishnan	Godwin Baby Adithia Prakash	Soji Mathew	Gauri Sasikumar K Anu Thilakan
C	Rahul Menon	Karun K Kaimal	Reshma Ashlin	Sidhija R. Nair Sneha S. Nair Consolation Prize - Ashwathi G. Nair
D	Nikhil Nambiar	Ashlin Chandran	Roshini Malandkar	Shini R. Nambiar
E	Muraleedharan D Nair	M. K. Ramesh	Anusha Iyer	Usha Nair
F	L. N. Venugopal	Nandakumar N. Nair	Jaya Naganathan	Girija B. Panicker



T S Radhakrishnan with T R Nambiar



T S Radhakrishnan, P V Vijaykumar and KIM team



Group A Winners with P V Vijaykumar, Balachandran Vellody and the Judges



Group B Winners



Group C Winners



Group D Winners

RAAGALAYA MUSIC COMPETITION

The 13th Raagalaya Light Music Competition was held at MEA School, Bhavani Nagar, Marol on Sunday the 29th January 2017 from 9.00 am. In all around 70 contestants participated. The winners received their trophies from Former Deputy Municipal Commissioner V. Balachandran and Popular Music Director T.S. Radhakrishnan. The judges for the music competition were Baburaj Menon, Sowmya Ayyappan and Vichoo Iyer. K Venugopal accompanied the contestants on the keyboard, Sani Moses on the tabla and Viswanathan (Vichoo Iyer) on the guitar.



P V Vijaykumar lighting the inaugural lamp



Group E Winners



Group F Winners

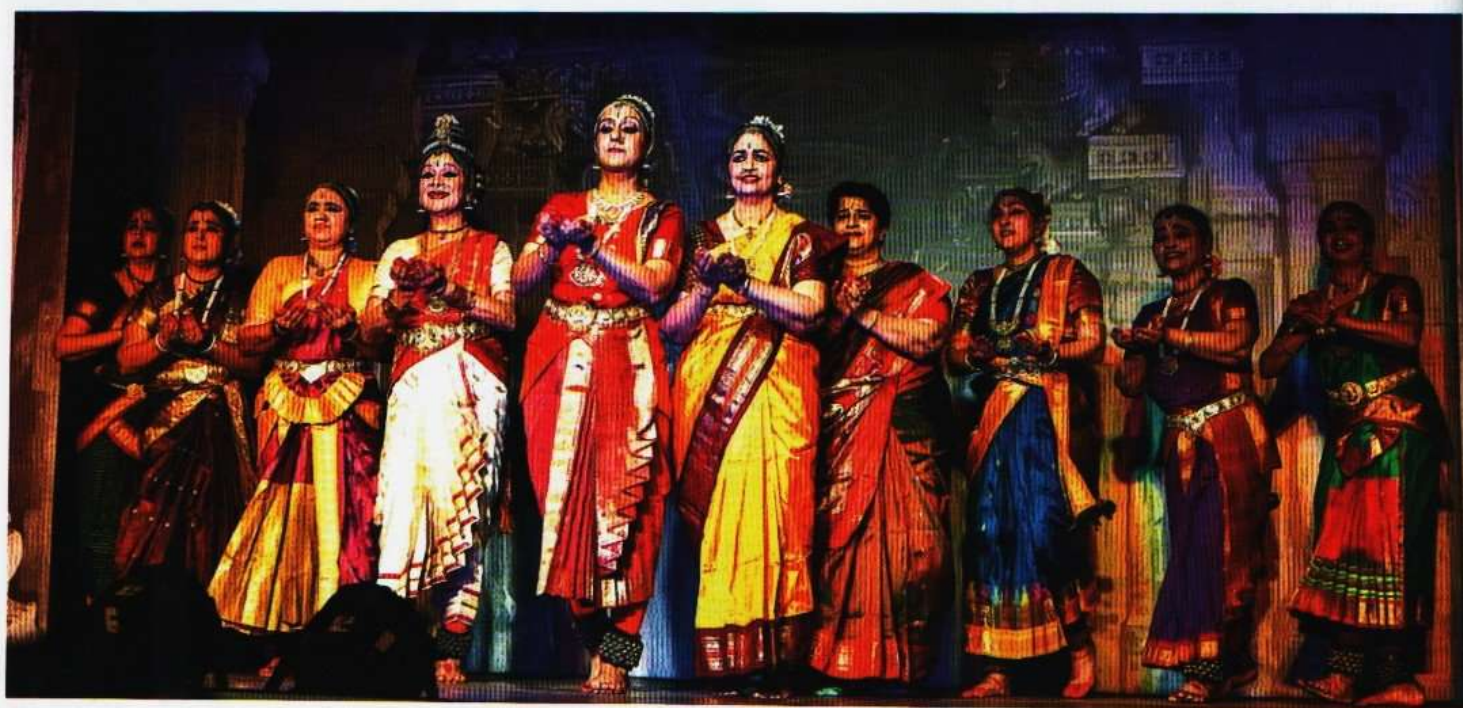


Natyanjali 2017 NRUTTAMAALIKA

Shanmukhapriya, the cultural and charitable wing of Sri Subramania Samaj, Chedda Nagar, organized its 13th Natyanjali 2017, the annual festival of Indian classical dances at the temple complex from February 10 to 24. Dance gurus, teachers and students of all

classical dance styles, namely Bharatanayam, Mohiniattam, Kathak, Kuchipudi, Odissi, from all over India and abroad performed on the all the days. Soloists / groups of various styles offered their Natyanjali all the days and on Mahasivaratri that is on 24th February senior teachers of different

classical styles offered short performances of their chosen style at the feet of Natarajan Siva. With the surge in the number of applications received, more days as well as more slots per day were allotted in this year's festival.



Senior Dance Teachers' performance



Age 50 years' Dance Teachers' performance

Photos by Suresh Muraleedharan.

Nrutnamaalika

Nrutnamaalika was an added feature of this year's festival. For the first time in Mumbai about 30 dance teachers / Choreographers who have been teaching different classical dance forms in Mumbai and its suburbs for many years, came together on one stage in group choreographies and performed on February 10.

The Dance teachers who participated in Nrutnamaalika were Bharatanatyam: Geeta Venkateswar, Girija Nair, Jayasree Rajagopalan, Jyothi Mohan, Kala Srinivasan, Kashmira Trivedi, Latha Raman, Manjula Manoj, Nandhini Ashok,

Naresh Pillai, Padmini Radhakrishnan, Prema Nagasundaram, Shamal Pawar, Suhasini Padale, Vijayalakshmi Ramanujam, Vijayalakshmi Suryanarayanan. Kathak: Alakananda Mukherjee, Chetan Saraiya, Harshada Jambhekar, Sunil Sunkara. Kuchipudi: Vijayshree Pillai, Odissi: Sharmishta Chattopadhyay. They performed in two age groups above 50 years and below 50 years and there was a group performance of both age groups in front of Lord Nataraja shrine. These items while exhibiting the individual traits of different styles also showcased the common aesthetics behind Indian classical dances, broadcasting the unity in diversity.

Veteran senior dance maestros and dance teachers of Mumbai attended the inaugural function. The driving force behind this unique performance 'Nrutthamaalika' and all the programmes of Natyanjali were P S Subramanian, Secretary of Shanmukhapriya, and Senior Dance teacher and choreographer and Director of Upaasana Dance Academy Smt Jayasree Nair and her husband Sudhakaran Nair. Natyanjali Mumbai has been growing popular year after year since its inception in 2005 and has also become a catalytic force in developing an atmosphere of camaraderie and cooperation among the art fraternity, specially classical dances.

Nrutnamaalika - An Overwhelming experience

Nandhini Ashok, Founder Director of Shree Paavitra Arts Academy, Mumbai who participated in Nrutnamaalika, shares her experience :



Nandhini Ashok

■ Nrutnamaalika was an amazing experience, it was conceptualised by Guru Jayshree Nair. Our dance piece was very well organised featuring various classical dance forms like Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Kathak, Kuchipudi. Almost for two weeks, all gurus were practising with enthusiasm. Everyone's ideas were taken into consideration. Though everyone was master in his/ her dance style, all were practising like students without any ego. All had come together as a team only with the aim to offer their best performance to the Almighty. I really feel if all Gurus will come together with such a passion then the beauty of classical art forms will bring out and it will spread across the world.

Dedicated to the Almighty all the classical styles flowed into one another and this oneness was mesmerising to the audience who could feel the beauty of the performance. An inspiration to bring our future generations together to preserve this wonderful art.

All contributed greatly to the spectacular piece which was jointly created as a team. The combining of various arts forms was original, creative and could create great impact on the audience. Synchronization among all teachers was very well, no one could make out that the teachers have learnt and are teaching different dance styles. It was an overwhelming experience. The choreography, well planned dancers, costumes, the beautiful music created magic. One of the senior Gurus mentioned that our performance held the audience mesmerised and spell bound which was amply evident.

Release on 3rd March 2017



Pillai Alegria 2017

Mahatma Education Society's Pillai Group of Institutions conducted their annual inter collegiate event 'Alegria The Festival of Joy' from 7th to 11th February 2017 at Pillai College, Navi Mumbai. The festival again proved why it is considered to be one of India's biggest college festivals as more than 150 colleges from across India participated with more than 50,000 students witnessing the grand festival.

The festival was inaugurated by Commissioner of Police, Navi Mumbai Hemant Nagarale. The highlight of the inauguration ceremony was a performance by Colombian dance group Anjali - Danzas de India on Bollywood numbers which left the audience spellbound.

The five-day festival had events ranging from dance and music competitions, treasure hunts, mind games, technical and literary events,

fashion shows, national and international celebrity appearances, sports and community service initiatives.

Every year Alegria sees a host of celebrities from around the world performing and judging various events on campus. This year was no different. The first day of Alegria saw the Singer/Actress Monica Dogra of Shaa'ir and Func Fame judge the Solo Singing competition. The second day had celebrity model/actress/singer and host of IPL Shibani Dandekar judging the Face of Alegria event. Adding to the glamour and excitement of the festival, day

three of Alegria saw Rochelle Rao from Big Boss and Kapil Sharma Show judging the Mr and Ms Alegria event. The students also got to interact with renowned cinematographer K U Mohanan in a Q&A session. One of the world's best female freestyle footballers, Lisa Zimouche from France entertained the students with her football tricks and one - to - one sessions with the crowd. Actor and singer Luke Kenny from Rock on judged the freestyle solo dance competition and performed for the students as well. Other celebrity judges included actor Tanuj Virwani, Gaurav and Chandni, World Champion Dance Group Kings United and Super Model Arthi Venkatesh.

One of the highlights of the festival was the movie promotion for *Aa Gaya Hero* starring the dancing king of Bollywood, Govinda. The crowd was left mesmerised as Govinda interacted with them and performed some of his



famous dialogues and dance moves.

The final two days of Alegria saw DJs from across the world performing at the main stage area for crowds of more than ten thousand people. The first concert was headlined by two of India's biggest DJs World No. 52 ranked Lost Stories and the Bass Raja Nucleya. The second concert featured international DJs Teri Miko and World No. 32 Quintino.

Alegria which is completely organised by students is well on its way to becoming India's premier college festival and has changed the way college festivals are perceived across the country.



Udaya Tara Nayar



Manasi



Sudha Menon

MONEY POWER AND CRIMINAL NEXUS ASSAULT WOMANHOOD IN KERALA



Sriprakash Menon

■ Kerala is the only state where women population exceeded that of men and safety of women was never questioned. Yet, it is shameful and shocking that a popular actress got

sexually assaulted while travelling along with his trusted driver. Even in urban centres of Kerala, women are very cautious and alert about their movement after dusk fearing alcoholics and "wild men (animals)". This horrendous incident cannot be termed as an isolated case and be overlooked for a state which has a highly cultured and literate milieu. The entire episode of the assault on the actress smacks of criminalization of Kerala society and this may be the tip of the iceberg.

Kerala needs to diffuse its culture of political violence and assault on women somewhere is linked to the degeneration of value system among the people especially the younger generation in Kerala. The struggle for establishing material and gender supremacy have its undercurrents for encouraging such crime. It is utterly tragic in 'god's own country - where women are praised, prayed, glorified and worshiped through literature, poetry, songs are treated in such

inhuman ways.

Udaya Tara Nayar - a senior Mumbai based cine editor said "am shocked simply because such a crime is committed by one's own driver. It's really bad for Kerala which had such a good record of respecting and empowering women." When we hear about women being assaulted in Delhi, Mumbai or Bengaluru, she felt "oh so bad, this will never happen in Kerala. Now this incident has proved, worst can happen in Kerala as well." Assault on women is becoming a national epidemic, "now you cannot trust any men whether it is cook, driver or anyone else. In Mumbai, she cited "several actress travel with body guards but in Kerala heroines travelled without any security. I wish the people in Kerala become more sensitive about women who are so careful, traditional yet modern in their lifestyles".

"At the outset, this episode is not a stray incident, it appears to be an organised crime which may have its roots in powerful political, economic and cine world. Settling score, giving quotation, dominance of money power are some of the factors which are changing the socio economic equilibrium in Kerala", Manasi noted poet and writer remarked. "What we are seeing on the surface is just a glimpse of a bigger criminalization happening in

this once value based Kerala. Nobody knows the truth, even the media have no clue except for changing statements appearing every day. I don't think ordinary people can plan such crime if so, then that is still a greater malady", she lamented. She said "it is sad, young girls are scared to move out in the evenings thinking if this can happen to an actress. We need to address such issues with boys and men and not give intimidating solutions to women".

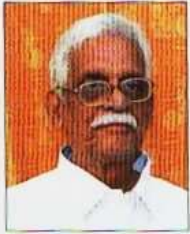
"When a woman is insulted, assaulted, raped or victimised in any manner, punishment has to be instant and of a kind which will be a deterrent to future crimes may be this is the time to introduce capital punishment for these sort of crimes.

We need to stop pussyfooting around these criminals. As a woman and as a mother, my blood boils when these criminals roam free and get to repeat their crime" observed Sudha Menon, author and biographer.

She suggested "if we need to, let us make examples of them and ensure that no man ever dares to commit a crime against a woman. Why are Nirbhaya's rapists still alive? Why have they not been hanged yet? It is time to walk the talk about protecting the dignity and rights of women in this country whether it is Delhi, Bengaluru or Kerala".

Future of Malayalam Poetry

The writer is vehemently opposing the current practice of non-adherence of metres in poetry. Poets of tomorrow have to strive hard from now on to compose couplets that adhere to metres.



Prof M R Chandrasekharan

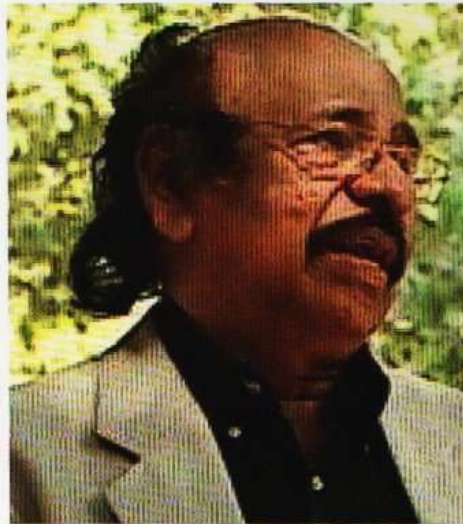
A little History

There are two mediums for literature; verse and prose. The beginning of literature is through verse. Its initial form was poetry. It emerged from the tongue of Valmiki. It was a miracle. Language must have evolved first and then poetry followed. I am not concerned about this phenomenon in other languages. In our language i.e., Malayalam the first form of literature was poetry; *Ramacharitham*, *Kannassaramayanam*, *Krishnagatha*, *Unnuneelisandesham*, *Kilippattukal* (Dravidian versification as emerging from birds), *thullal*, *Aattakathakal* etc. In the Dravidian family, this happened sometime in 825 AD.

Translations of well known works and their imitations came out in our literature much later. Prose was not considered then as a medium. The whole literature was prosody. The prosaic form appeared only during the last decade of nineteenth century. The initial works were novels and short stories later.

The authors depicted their characters in novels as men from Kerala. Prior to this, our men and women appeared in Kunchan Nambiar's writings in his *Thullal* stories. The poems of Malayalam now appear in prosaic form. The initial inspiration in this regard came from South America and Africa. Our poets wrote their poems in prosaic form and titled them as 'poem' before despatching to various publications/periodicals. The first translations in Malayalam came from Sanskrit but they were in verses. Even the translations from English also appeared in verses. The first translation from South America (a poem by Neruda) was also made in verses and K P G Namboothiri did it. It was published in 'Pravaham', a Communist publication. It was about Kremlin and Stalin and I am yet to forget it.

I prepared a list of translators from



Sachithanandan

Kerala. You can see the names of authors of *Ramacharitham*, *Kannassans*, *Ezhuthachan*, *Vallathol*, *Kumaran Asan*, *G Sankara Kurup*, *Kunhikuttan Thampuram*, *Sugathakumari*, *ONV Kurup*, *Nalappatt (Narayana Menon)*, *N V Krishna Variar*, *Vennikkulam Gopala Kurup* and so on. The first person to translate *Mahabharatam* in prosaic form in Malayalam was K Prakasam. Poet Thirunallur Karunakaran translated *Abhijnana Sakuntalam*. He simply translated all quatrains of the original Sanskrit play in prosaic form. Probably Sachithanandan learned to translate English poems into Malayalam prose from Thirunallur.

Translations during last century

Earlier translations were big events. When Nalappatt translated 'Les Miserables' of Victor Hugo as 'Pavangal', one of its propagators was poet Vallathol (Narayana Menon). Today a translation from English is quite routine. All news papers are translating the news coming from PTI. As soon as the print out comes out, translation starts to fill in the columns of the paper. I have done this 'instant translation' for 'Navajeevan' edited by (Joseph) Mundasseri and later in 'Mathrubhumi.' For many days I was alone in the editorial room in



K G Sankara Pillai

Navajeevan. I learned the trick of 'instant translation' during my Navajeevan days. In Mathrubhumi this job was easy. There were facilities of dictionaries and also persons who were experienced and therefore could guide me.

The story of translation of Valmiki *Ramayanam* by Vallathol is an old story. His translation of *Rigveda* happened later. It had that impetus seen in Nalappatt's translation of 'Les Miserables.' Today this impetus is absent in translations. It is business now. The well known works of popular writers without the burden of royalty is a good business.

The easy way in our poems of today is prosaic. Without much physical effort it could be done. There is no commitment that the reader should gain anything by reading it. The 'Kunhunni Style' is very popular now. Two lines and a bit of humour! That is Kunhunni's style. Meaningful writing is impossible in this method. It is not easy to write poems within metres without breaching the rules. The difference between prose and verse is that the latter has to follow certain metres. The new trend is total absence of metres. Critics see this trend like moving around without clothes on the body. Prosody is not the clothes but the skin. A body without skin is called a skeleton. Earlier writers were hesitant to call their prosaic work a poem. Now

that hesitation is gone and nudity is pass. Editors are also happy that they get enough material to fill in the columns. It is these editors who encouraged this downfall.

The legs are meant for walking. A person with legs can walk, run and also they could dance with their help. Walking is not dancing. Dancing and singing are to be learned in hard way unlike walking. Composing poems is also a similar exercise, said a famous poet (Ezra Pound). There are three ingredients to convert language into a poem; Passion, Precision and Music. It is similar to short stories also as they should have brevity, clarity and enjoyability. Loose writing is not permitted in poems and short stories. If you follow today's path, you would reach an undesirable region. Malayalam poems are facing that crisis now.

Returning to Blooming Poetry

When I was initiated to poetry,

Ramanan and *Vilasalatika* were very popular. They were followed by the poems written by P Bhaskaran, ONV and Vayalar. The poems of the Malayalam poetic triumvirate were in the text books. I used to wonder about the enormous fortune enjoyed by the poetry lovers of that era when Vallathol was writing *Sahityamanjari*. Now our poetic field is like a paddy field that has seen the latest harvest.

Today two persons are considered as celebrated poets; Sachidanandan and K G Sankara Pillai. For the new generation, they are the role models. My heart bleeds when I see the talented young poets of today mistake them as their guides in the field of poetry. They imitate them without realising the folly of imitating without consideration of meaning and character. When we go through the entries received in poetry contests held for students, we realise the nadir of this folly. In prosody, there is a system, a challenge and also a beauty. Let us hope that the next generation would follow the prosody controlled

within metres. If they start concentrating in it from today, tomorrow they will become celebrated.

Many of them unfortunately do not follow that path. They are misled. I have no personal animosity with Sachidanandan and Sankara Pillai but I consider their poems are waylaid. One of them was an English professor. Sachidanandan is a poet bird flying around the world. Both of them had flown the 'Naxalite' sky before landing in poetry. They are not without achievements; not unsuccessful in life but their poetic zone is unsuitable. They are not without talent but are trapped in a zone having misled. It is a loss to the Malayalam poetry and also became harmful for the future generation. May they pardon me!

(Prof M R Chandrasekharan has several books to his credit and was prolific writer in leading Malayalam periodicals. He retired from Malabar Christian College, Kozhikode)

DANCE REVIEW

KIRTANA'S DELIGHTFUL EXPRESSIONS

Shivoham Institute of Performing Arts presented the BharataNatyam debut performance by KirtanaAnanth at Rang Mandira auditoriummBandra.

KirtanaAnanth is the talented disciple of Guru Mubina and Guru NileshSingha of ShivohamInstitue and is the daughter of Ananth Narayan Gopalakrishnan and SoumyaAnanth who hail from Palakkad in Kerala. It was a dream come true for the young Kirtana to perform after years of learning the divine art of BharataNatyam.

Kirtana commenced with the invocations and the pravesadaru in panchajathi. The NartanaGanapati featured the joyous dance of the Lord followed with the Alarippu. The elaborate Varnam portrayed the charitram of Lord Krishna with the dramatic display of episodes like the killing of the serpent Kaliya and the death of the wicked Kamsa. It was interesting and a delight to watch Kartana with her powerful expressions and dramatic quality enlivening the varied characters from the Hindu mythology. With her large expressive eyes, it was a pleasure to witness her performance as she gets completely involved, creating a lasting impression on the

audience.

After SrimanNarayana, the piece-de-resistance of the evening was Mahadeva Shiva Sambho that depicted the majesty and the power of the Lord through varied episodes. Besides the onslaught of the Ganga, the Ravanastotram was unusual. Due to his pride and arrogance Ravana decides to lift Mount Kailash, Lord Shiva is disturbed and just keeps his feet down and Ravana is almost crushed and he ardently prays to Lord Shiva with the RavanaStotram, Shiva is pleased and blesses him. Kirtana concluded her performance with the intricate MohanaKalyaniThillana. Kirtana is a wonderful dancer and could be among the main ranks of dancers, provided she takes a little more concern over the pure dance movements, enhancing the aesthetic quality of the performance.

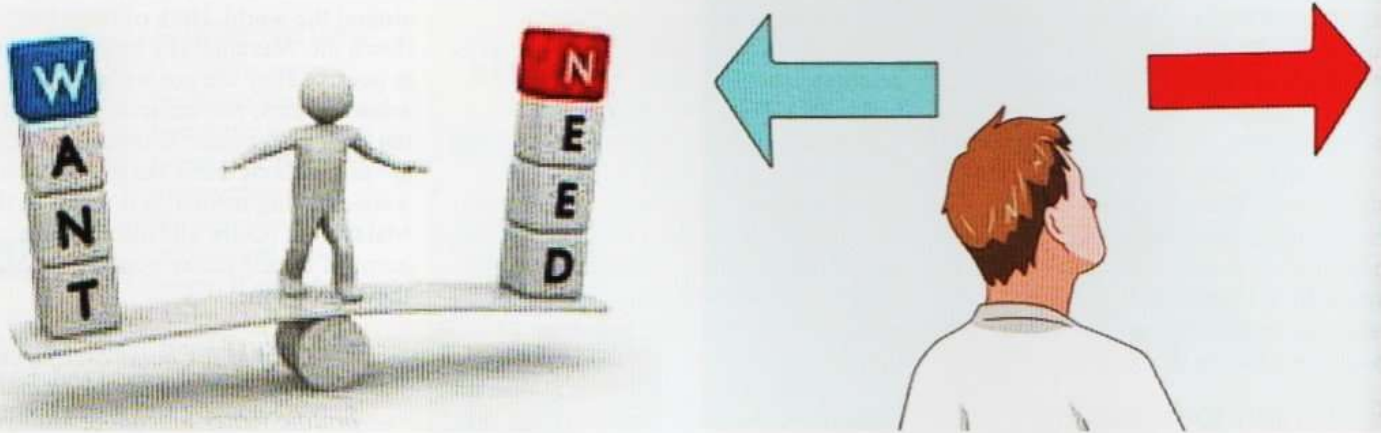
Kirtanarecieved brilliant orchestral support from Guru NileshSingha and Mubina for nattuvangam, Guru PadminiRadhakrishnan for vocal, KG Vishwanath for mridangam, Ananatharaman for violin and Raghvendra for Flute. On the whole a sparkling performance.

- Guru Vijay Shanker



Distinguish reasonably.....

IS YOUR DESTINATION AND VEHICLE ACTUALLY SYNCHRONIZED?

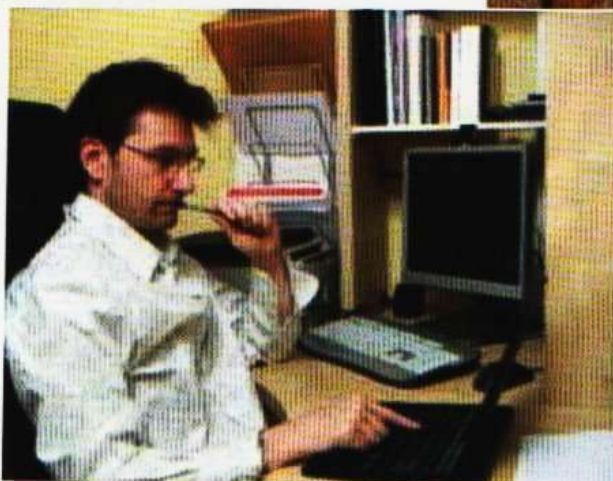


Vidhya Vasudevan

■ If I ask you, "What do you want out of life?" I am sure like everybody else you will say - *to live a carefree happy life, to fall in love & have amazing sex and relationships, to look perfect, make money,*

be popular, well-respected and admired in the society we live in.

Everybody wants to have an amazing job but not everyone wants to suffer through 60-hour work weeks,



long commutes, and obnoxious paperwork, get blamed from superiors when targets not achieved.

Everybody wants to start their own business or become financially independent- but you don't end up a successful entrepreneur unless you find

a way to appreciate the risk, the uncertainty, the repeated failures, and working insane hours on something you have no idea whether will be successful or not.

Everyone wants a partner/a spouse - but not everyone is willing to go

through the tough conversations, the awkward silences, the hurt feelings and the emotional psychodrama to get there. But still they do to settle and wonder "What if?" for long years until the question morphs from "What if?" into "What and why was that for?"

Everybody wants to have great sex and an awesome relationship - but you don't end up attracting someone amazing without appreciating the emotional, physical and mental instability that comes with rejections, building the sexual tension that never gets released and staring blankly at a phone that never rings.

Everybody wants an amazing physique - but you don't end up with one unless you legitimately appreciate the pain and physical stress that comes with living inside a gym for hour upon hour, unless you love calculating and calibrating the food you eat, planning your life out in tiny plate-sized portions.

Like I mentioned above everybody wants something. And everybody wants something enough. They just aren't aware of what it is that they want, or rather, what they want "enough."

At the core of all human behavior, our needs are more or less similar. What determines our success isn't "What we want to enjoy?" Sometimes I ask people, "What is the pain that you want to sustain and how do you choose to suffer?"

That answer will actually get you somewhere. It's the question that can change your life- define you, separate you or may even bring you much closer.



Ultimately it can make me "ME" and you "YOU".

Who you are is defined by the values you are willing to struggle for. People who enjoy the struggles of a gym are the ones who get in good shape. People who enjoy long work-weeks and the politics

of the corporate ladder are the ones who move up. People who enjoy the stresses and uncertainty of the starving artist lifestyle are ultimately the ones

who live it and make it.

If you find yourself wanting something month after month, year after year, yet nothing happens and you never come any closer to it, then maybe what you actually want is a fantasy, an

idealization, an image and a false promise. Maybe what you want isn't what you want, you just enjoy wanting. Maybe you don't actually want it at all.

The quality of our life is not determined by the quality of our positive experiences but by the quality of our negative experiences. And to get good at dealing with negative experience, you have to get good at dealing with life.

This is the most simple and basic component of life: our struggles determine our successes. So choose your struggles wisely, my friend. ■

HEALTH TIPS

1. Dissolve half tsp baking soda in a glass of water and drink it at the first signs of Urinary tract infection.

2. Painful ingrown nails? Soak them in warm water solution to ease the pain and swelling.

3. Drinking hot water regularly strengthens the digestive system and reduces metabolic wastes.

4. Switch to red rice from white rice as it is a natural remedy for lowering total cholesterol LDC levels and triglyceride levels.

5. For healthy joints and muscles include raisins and citrus fruits like oranges in your diet.

6. For immediate relief from acidity suck in a piece of clove.

7. To get rid of a nagging head ache, tie ajwain powder in a piece of thin cloth and smell it frequently.

8. Methi leaves are good to fight anaemia. Mix them frequently in your diet.

9. Massage your hands and legs every week with warm coconut oil and wash them after some time. It will smoothen your arms and legs.

10. Dates are good to fight fatigue. Soak four or five dates in water overnight and grind it with the same water

and drink it the next morning.

11. Boil haldi powder and pepper powder with milk and drink it warm if you have a sore throat.

12. Sweet lime juice (moosambi juice) is a good remedy to combat the weakness after a sickness.

13. Ginger soothes stomach upsets, overcomes nausea, stops diarrhea and helps digestion.

14. Bananas and melons are rich sources of potassium and magnesium. They are good for water retention in the body.

15. For an upset stomach roast cumin seed (jeera), boil it in water and drink it

16. To treat a running nose drink amla (gooseberry) juice with a pinch of lime and honey.

17. Pappaya fruit helps overcome constipation and ease bowel movements.

18. Tomatoes are rich in anti-oxidants and and lower risk of cholesterol induced damage to arteries.

19. Til (Sesame, ellu) is high in zinc and helps strengthen the immune system of the body.

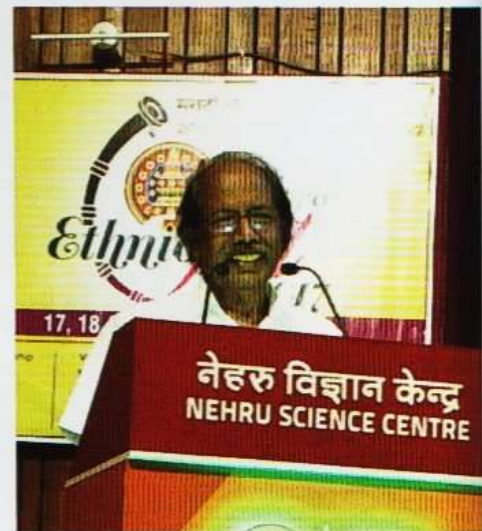
20. Figs are good for increasing bloodcount. Boil some figs in milk and drink it regularly.



Marathi - Malayalam Poets Meet

■ A unique *Jugalbandhi* of Marathi and Malayalam poetry rendition by Mumbai poets of these languages was held on February 19 at Nehru Science Centre, Worli as a part of Ethnic Festival organized jointly by All Mumbai Malayali Association (AMMA) and Nehru Science Centre. The event was inaugurated by EIS Thilakan, the Mumbai based leading poet and critic in Mumbai, presenting his poem. Renowned Malayalam poets in and around Mumbai, G Viswanathan, KVS Nelluvai, P K Muralikrishnan, KP Xavier, Ravi Thodupuzha, E Harindranath, Unni Chankath, S Harilal, P S

Sumesh, Narayanankutty, Rekha Raj, and poets in Marathi Hemanth Rajaram, Varsha Joshi, Jhanvi Shiralkar, Anuya Dharap, Ruda Khapard, Vijay Joshi, Divya Pravin Champanerker rendered their poems. The event was presided over by Muralikrishnan and discourses on poetry were carried out by C P Krishnakumar and S Harilal. Sindhu Nair welcomed the guests and K V S Nelluvai gave vote of thanks. Jojo Thomas (Director of the Festival) and Mr Unnikrishnan (Nehru Science Centre) jointly distributed certificates to participants.



E I S Thilakan inaugurating the Kavisangamam



Padmashri Meenakshamma lighting the lamp

Kadathanadu Kudumba Kootayma

■ Kadathanadu Kudumba Kootayma was inaugurated at Jainagar Bund Auditorium by Kalaripayattu Guru Padmashri Meenakshamma and Calicut University former Vice Chancellor KKN Kurup, P Vasudevan, Singer VT Murali, and businessman PP Sukumaran. This was followed by a kalaripayattu performance by Meenakshamma and a musical programme 'Pazhamayude Madhuram' by VT Murali and his team.



Gurudevagiri Pilgrimage Concluding Ceremony.

■ The Concluding ceremony of Gurudevagiri pilgrimage took place on February 5. Nearly 7000 devotees from all parts of Mumbai participated in the same. Tableaux, pambamelam, nadaswaram, kavadiattam and thalapoli accompanied the procession that ended at Gurudevagiri Nerul. SNMS President N Sasidharan presided over the function and Secretary N S Salim Kumar welcomed the gathering.

Swami Hrithambarananda, Swami Sandeepananda Giri, V R Sunil Kumar MLA V N Vasana, Jaya C, Suvarna, Navin Chandra Bhandiwadekar, M I Damodaran and R Sreedharan addressed the gathering. A logo associated with the translation of Sree Narayanaya Guru's Deivadashakam in 100 world languages was also released. In his address, Swami Sandeepananda Giri stated that Sree Narayana Guru was a great phenomenon and his philosophy of 'one caste, one religion, one God,' acquired international following.



Swami Sandeepananda Giri speaking on the occasion

NEW MC Members

■ Ulhas Nagar Arts & Welfare Association has elected its new Managing Committee. GBSureshkumar is the President, RB Kurup Vice President, T Thampan is the General Secretary, and G Ravindran is the Treasurer, C Mohan Nair is the Joint secretary (Admin) and K Narayanan Nair is the Joint secretary (A/c). Committee members include V S Appu, ABalakrishnan Nair (Rajan), C K DamodaranMenon, M Mayur Nair, K Narayanan, T C Prabhakaran Nair.



SNMS Sakinaka Mahila Vibhagam New Managing Committee with Central Committee Mahila Vibhagam Secretary Bijili Bharatan.

Annual Function

■ *Natyaniketan Nruthya Sangeeta Academy's* 15th Annual function was held on 21st January 2017 at Tarapur TIMA auditorium. Chinchani Tarapur Education Society Chairman Rajnikant Shroff inaugurated the event. Viraj Sriram Centennial School Principal S K Mishra was the Distinguished Guest in the function. Adv Padma Divakaran, E M Salgunan, Bhujanga Shetty attended the event. More than 250 students participated in the variety entertainment programme that followed. Academy's Chairperson, Smt Rashmi Jayasuryan honoured Rajnikant Shroff with Appreciation Award for his fifty years contribution in the education field. Certificates and prizes were distributed by the respected dignitaries to the Academy's students of academic year 2016 / 17.



Lighting the inaugural lamp

Natyaniketan, a classical Dance and Music academy at Tarapur, (Affiliated Bharat GaayanSamaj, Pune) was established in 2001. Sangeet Guru, A K

Jayasuryan (SangeetVisharad, State and National award Winner), and Smt. RashmiJayasuryan (NatyaVidushi) are the founders of this academy.

Manathacharya Puraskaram

■ Thane Nair Welfare Association celebrated its 20th annual day function along with 140th Mannam Jayanthi at St. Lawrence College on 26th January 2017. Association President K R Hari-kumar inaugurated the function by lighting the traditional lamp at Acharya Mandapam. Several programmes were conducted by the Youth wing and Ladies wing like Mohiniyattam, Thiruvathiara, traditional songs etc. On this occasion PWD Minister Eknath Shinde, Ravindra Phatak MLA, Mayor Sanjay More, Corporators Vikrant Chavan, Manoj Shinde, Yogesh Jankar were present.



MGA Menon receives the Mannathacharya Puraskaram.

This year the Mannathacharya Puraskaram was presented to MG Aravindaskha Menon by Minister Eknath Shinde. Many cultural activities

were organized and a special program was arranged by Kalabhavan Ragesh. The program was ended with the traditional feast.



Houses at Low rates

■ BJP office in Vasai has started free online booking for implementing discounted rates for building houses for the common man, under Prime Minister's 'Awaz yojana.' The counter will be open from 10 am to 6 pm and the individuals should bring along Xerox copies of aadhar card and pan card along with the originals, according to BJP Vasai president Utham Kumar. Contact: 9323528198

Chinthaman Vanka MP inaugurating the PM's Awaz yojana.



Winners of the Meet

Annual Athletic Meet

■ The Bombay Keraleeya Samaj conducted their Annual Athletic meet 2017, from 8 am to 7 pm at the Guru Nanak Khalsa College grounds, Kings Circle on January 29. The various events held during the day included 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500 and 3000 Meter Run, Shot putt, Discuss Throw, Long Jump as well as 4 X 100 metres relay races. This year 448 participants of various age groups starting from 10 years onwards to senior Men and Women representing 21 Institutions (Schools, Colleges and Clubs) in Mumbai participated in various 96 events categorised age-wise ensuring representation in different multiple events by each participant. It re-affirms that this Annual Sporting Event is gaining in popularity among the Mumbaitees and vindicates the commitment shown by Bombay Keraleeya Samaj towards development of sports activities in Mumbai and its suburbs.

The overall winners trophy was presented to Track Masters, Chembur and the award for second best team



went to Mumbai Port Trust sports club. Trophies for the Best Male and Female athletes were bagged by Ajinkya J Bhosle (Kirti College - Mumbai) and P Nayana (Mumbai Port Trust sports Club) respectively.

Winners of various events were awarded trophies, cash prizes and certificates by Devadas Nair (Secretary), M Jayaraman (Vice President), other office bearers of BKS.

A Satheeshan and Adv. S K Nair along with their team of 25 qualified officials handled the technicalities of successfully conducting the event with the help of Samaj Volunteers. The BKS staff members Renjini Shaj, Rema Shashi, M Arumugham and Suraj Gaikwad also deserve special mention for their total commitment towards the smooth and timely execution of the event as per plans.





Winners of the Meet

Annual Athletic Meet

■ The Bombay Keraleeya Samaj conducted their Annual Athletic meet 2017, from 8 am to 7 pm at the Guru Nanak Khalsa College grounds, Kings Circle on January 29. The various events held during the day included 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500 and 3000 Meter Run, Shot putt, Discuss Throw, Long Jump as well as 4 X 100 metres relay races. This year 448 participants of various age groups starting from 10 years onwards to senior Men and Women representing 21 Institutions (Schools, Colleges and Clubs) in Mumbai participated in various 96 events categorised age-wise ensuring representation in different multiple events by each participant. It re-affirms that this Annual Sporting Event is gaining in popularity among the Mumbaitees and vindicates the commitment shown by Bombay Keraleeya Samaj towards development of sports activities in Mumbai and its suburbs.

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BKS Walking Race

■ The 53rd annual Walking Race Of Bombay Keeraleeya Samaj Matunga was organised on February 5 at 6.30am. Over 100 competitors took part in it that was held at Shivaji Park. The winners were:

10 Km Walking Race MEN: 1. Vipul Thombare - Dr.T R Narawane Sports Academy, 2.Vaishnav Ambre - Dr. T R Narawane Sports Academy, 3. Ravi Yadav - N K E S School. Stylish Walker Chandan Oza - N K E S School.

10 Km Walking Race - WOMEN: 1. Omiga Koli - Dr. T R Narawane Sports Academy, 2. Swapnali Kijbili - Dr.T R Narawane Sports Academy, 3. Devanshi Shilesh Dedhia - Bombay Kraleeya Samaj. Stylish Walker - P Nayana ,Mumbai Port Trust Sports Club.

10 Km Walking Race under 15 BOYS: 1. Omkar Kadam - Dr.T R Narawane Sports Academy, 2. Pravin Ram - Dr.T R Narawane Sports Academy, 3. Ronit Sahani - Mumbai Port Trust Sports Club. Stylish Walker - Tanishk Kadvekar- Mumbai Port Trust Sports Club

10 Km Walking Race - under15 GIRLS: 1. Anagha Angale - Mumbai Port Trust Sports Club, 2. Priya Gupta - Mumbai Port Trust Sports Club, 3. Ashite Koli - Dr.T R Narawane Sports Academy. Stylish Walker - Dhanshree Patil- Dr.T R Narawane Sports

10 Km Walking Race (MEN 40-50 YEARS): 1. Sachin Rangdale - B A R C
b. 10 Km Walking Race (WOMEN 40-50 YEARS): 1. Smt Sujatha Babu - BKS.



The organisers and winners of the Walking Race



PMN Menon Trophy -10 Km Walking Race (MEN 50-65YEARS): 1. D C Asopiya - B A R C.

PMN Menon Trophy-10 Km Walking Race (WOMEN 50-65YEARS): 1.Tereza Theofilo Dsouza - B K S

Indian Oil Trophy -5 Km Walking Race (MEN ABOVE 65 YEARS): N E Krishnan.

Indian Oil Trophy -5 Km Walking Race (WOMEN ABOVE 65 YEARS): Nancy



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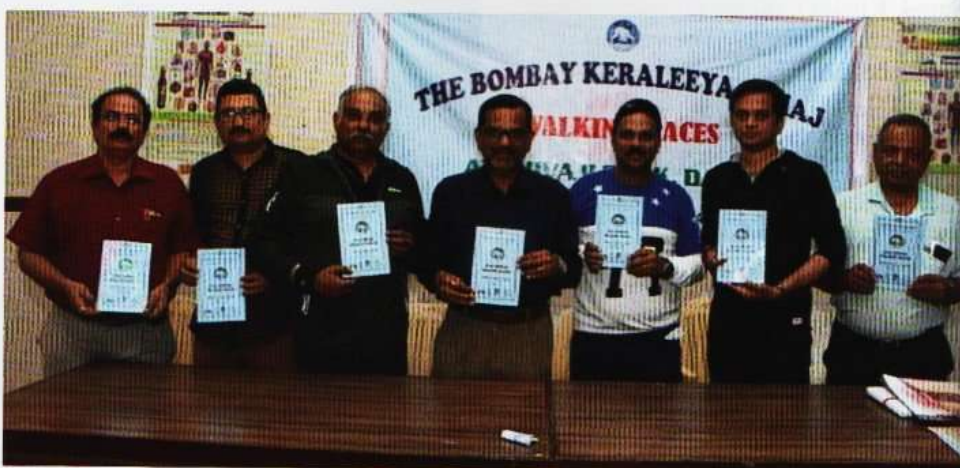
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Annual Day

■ Mumbai Kala Bhavan Powai will be presenting its Annual Day with a grand galaxy of instrumental, music, soloist/duet/group songs, dances and other variety entertainment programme at Smt Zaverben Popatlal Sabhagriha, Upashray Lane in Ghatkopar (E) on March 11 at 3.30 pm, according to its Director V Srinivasan. Mohd Arif, (Naseem) Khan MLA, (Ex Minister for Textiles, Minorities Development and AUKAF Govt of Maharashtra) will be the chief guest at the function.



Dr Oommen David, Founder Director of Holy Angels School Dombivili, receiving 'Best Educationist 2017' award at the hands of Senior Justice of Kerala High Court, Kamal Pasha, organised by 'Kashmir to Kerala Social Foundation' at Hotel Leela. Standing beside is Dy Chairman of Rajya Sabha P J Kurien.



Nisha Gilbert with her students

Nirjara

■ Nirjara 2017 presented by Nisha Gilbert (Founder and Director of Nupur School of Dance) and her students was organised at Smt. Bhuribhen Laxmichand Golwala Auditorium, Ghatkopar West. The occasion was graced by renowned singer, actor, model and classical dancer Uttara Unni as Chief Guest. Guests of honor included Geetha Vijayashankar (Mohiniattam Exponent), George Sebastian (Mathrubhoomi) and Navneet Patil (educationist, Fashionista and performing artiste). Music was led by N N Shivprasad along with Satish Krishnamurthy and other prominent artistes from the art field.



Dignitaries on stage with Nisha Gilbert

Seminar on Human Rights.

■ While speaking at a seminar on the Human Rights organized by SNMS, P Mohandas acting Chairman of Kerala Human Rights Commission remarked that unlawful activities multiply in the community when we lose interest in the well being of our fellowmen . Mere worship in temples is not sufficient but we should have the willingness to love others and participate in their miseries, Mohandas said.

P Mohandas, acting Chairman of Kerala Human Rights Commission addressing the audience



Bharatanatyam Arangettams

■ Students of Smt. Prasanna Nambiar and her daughters Smt. Ajitha Nambiar and Smt. Amrutha Menon performed their Arangettams. They are the students of Nrityaprabha School of Indian Classical Dances learning Bharatanatyam at YWCA and MVM School Centres at Andheri (West).

Ashwathy Namboodiri and Sharika Menon with Teachers and T.P K Nambiar.



Lavanya Ananthan Performing at ISCON Juhu.



Pratiksha Rane, Niyati Sarangkar, Siddhi Rathod, Thanishaa Mendon and Mitali Sanghavi performing at Veer Savarkar Auditorium at Shivaji Park.

New MC Members

■ AKG Nair was elected as President and Anoop Chalkaran and E J Samuel as Vice-presidents of Borivli Malayali Samajam in the 50th AGM held on January 22.

In the subsequent Managing Committee Meeting Ms. Rakhee Sunil was selected as Secretary and Sashi Kartha as Treasurer. Other Managing Committee Members are

V S Nair, George Joseph, Ms Rekha Sadanand, P V Damodaran, K K Mukundan Menon, M Balan Nair S Augustine, M Murali Shankar, K Rajagopalan, R Vasu, Rakesh Nair, Venugopal Karta, Dilish P Nair, Shyam P Nair, PK Ignatius, Pavithran Nicholson, Rajan Karkkara, John Mathew and Ms Simi S Nair.



AKG Nair



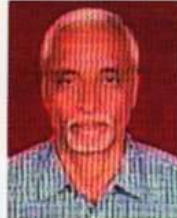
Anoop Chalkaran



E J Samuel



Rakhee Sunil



Sashi Kartha



A Sampath MP inaugurated the one day Sports Meet conducted by SNMS Nerul-Seawoods - Juinagar Unit by waving the yellow flag. Zonal Secretary R Sreedharan, Unit Secretary P R Baburaj and PR Krishnan also in the picture.



Kalashree Lalitha Kalalayam Nambisan, Professor of Nalanda Dance University Mumbai, inaugurating the District Level Mohiniattam, Bharatanatyam Dance competition organised by Pune Chinchwad Malayalee Samajam.

Sukumari Anusmaranam

■ Tru Indian Information & Guidance Society and Mumbai Urban Malayali Sauhridaya Vedi will be jointly organising the late



Padmashri Sukumari Pranama Sandhya at 4.30 pm at Anand Bala Bhavan Airconditioned Hall in Dombivili (East), near Railway Station on March 26 as part of *muttathe mulla* programme that encourages Kerala music and dance art forms. Several eminent Mumbai Malayalees will be speaking on the late Sukumari the Malayalam actress, and a dance programme, 'Sukumari Pranama Sandhya' by budding Mumbai Malayali dancers will be presented as a tribute to the actress during the event, according to Tru Indian Society's Creative Wing Director Ambika Warasier.

Athirolsavam 2017

Ambika Warasier Director, Creative Wing of Tru Indian Information & Guidance Society has stated that the Society will extend help to those who desire to participate in 'Athirolsavam 2017' to be conducted by Parvanenthu Thiruvadira School Ernakulam, on May 1. Those desiring to avail of this facility should register their names with Tru Indian by March 15. This support is open to all Malayalees in the Mumbai, Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Chattisgarh and a Committee headed by Ambika Warasiyar has been formed. The registered participants will also be given training at Badlapur Shree Ramadaasa Ashram. For more details contact 8422007014/ 9320986322.



Gateway LitFest celebrates Indian authors

■ The third edition of Gateway LitFest for Indian language literature held at the Experimental Theatre in NCPA complex on February 25 and 26 was attended by about 40 writers from 15 Indian languages.

The fest was organised by *Kaakka*, a Mumbai-based quarterly Malayalam magazine, and communication company P4C.

Prominent attendees include renowned filmmaker Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Hindi poet and Jnanpith award winner Raghuveer Choudhari, noted writers from 15 languages including Tilottama Majumdar, Subodh Sarkar (Bengali), Sachin Ketkar (Gujarati), Kumar Ketkar, Mangesh Kale, Sharankumar Limbale, Hemant Divate, Saleel Wagh (Marathi), M Mukundan, KR Meera (Malayalam), Cho Dharman, Salma (Tamil), Shafi Shauq (Kashmiri), Desmond Khamawafang (Assami), Dr.

Manmohan IPS, Desraj Kali (Punjabi), Parichay Das (Bhojpuri), Prasannarajan, Anju Makhija (English), Chandana Dutt (Mythili), Damodar Mauzo (Konkani), Ramesh Suryavanshi (Ahirani), and others.

The event honoured Odia poet and writer Haldhar Nag, who writes in the script-free Sambalpuri (Kosali) language. He started penning poetry while working in a village teashop.

A discussion forum for writers from script-free languages such as Bhojpuri, Ahirani, Mythili, Konkani, Khasi, and



Adoor Gopalakrishnan presenting Lifetime achievement award to Haldhar Nag., Bengali writer Subodh Sarkar, Jnanpith awardee Raghuveer Chaudhari also seen.



Padmashree Kumar Ketkar speaking at the Marathi Session.



Session on Languages

Santhali stole the limelight of this edition's fest.

A discussion on the topic, "Indian cinema is not Bollywood", was attended by prominent Marathi filmmaker and actor Subodh Bhawe, Tamil filmmaker Vasanth Balan, Malayalam filmmaker Anjali Menon and Bollywood director Bejoy Nambiar.

Oxford University Press editor Mini Krishnan, Penguin's Ambar Sahil Chatterjee, and Cross Word's Anup Jerajani, and Vani Prakashan's Aditi Maheshwari spoke on the topic of publishing and translation.



Adoor Gopalakrishnan at the session on cinema.

Director Board meeting of Global NSS

Director Board meeting of Global NSS was held at Powai. Global NSS, a Nair Organisation which is an apex body of various Nair organisations of all the countries in the world headquartered at New Delhi with the primary objective of building the network of Nair families all over the world in preserving their unity, culture and traditions and further enhance the resources in uplifting and sustaining the economic and intellectual growth of the Nair Community, held its board meeting on Sunday the 19th February at Ayyappa Vishnu Temple Auditorium at Powai. The meeting was hosted by Kendriya Nair Samskarika Sangh, Maharashtra which is affiliated to Global NSS. Global NSS Working President Jaishankar Unnithaan lighted the lamp on the occasion.

Harikumar Menon, General Secretary of Kendriya Nair Samskarika Sangh, Maharashtra and a board member of Global NSS delivered the Welcome Speech. Working President Jaishankar Unnithaan, Secretary General MKG Pillai, Mancheri Bhaskaran Pillai (Patron of Global N S S Kerala Chapter), V Suresh, Babu Panickar, Udayabhanu, TSS Nair, MD Jayaprakash, KKSasidharan, Shiv Prasad, Kumaran Nair, S R Pillai, N K Thampi, S S Nair and RR Nair spoke on the occasion. Global NSS Vice President Ramachandran Paleri proposed a Vote of Thanks.



Jaishankar Unnithaan lighting the lamp.



On the occasion of the Maha Sivaratri, Shri Sankara Mattham, Matunga had conducted abhishekams to Lord Siva in the form of Sivalinga full night with Rudrabhishekam - Special bath for 11 times on Siva idol with milk, honey, curd and Bilwa leaves, chanting Rudram and Chamakam. There was also Laksharchana chanting of 'Om Namasivaya' in the evening.



Rugmini Swayamvaram at Vashi Vaikuntam Guruyurappan Temple.



Raagalaya Orchestra performing a devotional music programme during Chathayadina puja at Gurudevagiri in Nerul



Section of audience

Yatra Samiti on Agitational Path

■ Members of Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana's Yatra Samiti and the Malayali Samajams of the Konkan zone namely Karwar Malayali Association, All Goa Federation of Malayali Associations, Konkan Malayali Federation held a meeting on February 11 at Ratnagiri Keraleeya Association to discuss and take action on the rising crime and theft in the Konkan railway services, highly priced food packets and lack of cleanliness in the compartments etc. In accordance with the decision taken then, a protest dharna will be staged at Kurla, Thane, Pen, Roha, Chiplun, Ratnagiri, Madgaon, and Karwar on March 12 at the same time. There will also be a signature campaign initiated by the samajams in which all Malayalees are requested to lend their support, according to Sasikumar Nair (Chairman) and Dinesh Poduval (General Convener) of Yatra Samiti. For further details contact: Kurla - C H Gopalakrishnan 9869484899; Thane - Sashikumar Nair 9969104894, G S Pillai - 9820462099; Panvel - Srikumar T 9920973797; Asokan PP 9594950070; Roha - Babu Nair 9860795015; Chiplun - Valsan 8975250250; Ratnagiri - Roy Elias 8605684123; Goa - Subbulyer 9970057235; Karwar - PP Vasudevan 9448126964.



Mantra chanting by the participants, Swamini Nitya Chetana leading the mantra chanting (inset)

Sadhana Patana Camp

■ The Womens Wing of Sree Narayana Samiti organised a Sadhana Patana Camp for couples and youngsters on February 26 and 27 at Gurudevagiri Nerul. The camp was conducted by Swaminis Sabari Chetana and Nitya Chetana of One World School of Vedanta based in Ernakulam. There were meditation and yoga sessions, musical programmes and mind relaxing

classes in the camp which served as a de-stressing technique for those who attended the event.

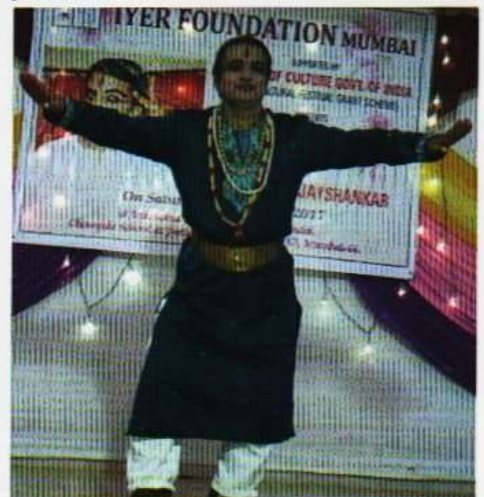
SNMS Chairman MI Damodaran, Secretary NS Salim Kumar, Zonal Secretary MG Raghavan, R Sasidharan, Cultural Wing Convener PP Sadasivan Secretary VV Chandran Vanitha Vibhagam Secretary Bijili Bharatan attended the concluding event.



Mrs Rakhee Sunil being presented with the Mumbai Karmashresta Vanitha Award during the 19th Jwala Awards which was held at Mysore Hall Matunga.

Lecture Demonstration

■ Noted Kuchipudi and Kathakali exponent Guru Vijay Shanker recently presented a lecture-demonstration on Indian classical dances at Chowgule School and Junior college in Borivali (E) organised by Iyer Foundation and supported by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The students were thrilled to see varied gestures and movements performed by the master performer.



Guru Vijay Shanker

Guru Pranama Pooja

■ 'Kshetrakala Vadya Sangham' of Mumbai observed Guru Pooja in Nutan Dhyam Mandir School, Kalyan. It was a joint venture of Kshetrakala Vadya Sangham and 'Shrushti' to make the young generation about the relevance of dedication to one's guru. After lighting a lamp before the portrait of Pookkattiri Rama Poduval, Guru of renowned Mumbai Temple Artist Anil Poduval, the disciples played Chenda. Idacka etc in unison. Panamanna Sasi, another disciple of Rama Poduval, was the Chief Guest.

The young artist of Mumbai Arjun Marar along with other Chenda, Idacka and Elathalam (Cymbals) were also felicitated. Deputy General Manager of Mathrubhumi Television K Madhu, Tru Indian President C G Varier and artist Unnikrishna Poduval spoke on the occasion. This was followed by a ballet



Thayambaka by Panamanna Sasi and group

'Urmila' directed by Anil Poduval in Mohiniattam style. Smt Chitra Varier, disciple of Kalasri Udyogamandal Vikraman Pillai enacted the character

of Urmila.

The last event, a 'thayambaka' by Panamanna Sasi and group, was well appreciated by the connoisseurs.



Panamanna Sasi being felicitated



Smt Chitra Varier performing Mohiniattam



Upendra Menon Chairman participating in sports Day Activities at Saket Towers CHS along with Jaisinghani Ex-Manager United Carbon, Retd Justice Gajiyani and Sohanlal Soni Ex.Director, Coal India Ltd.

Anniversary Celebrations

■ Ente Kuttanadu Foundation celebrated its second anniversary at Terna Auditorium in Nerul. Karanja Naval Station Commander and INS Unit Commanding Officer M L Mathew inaugurated the event. President Jacob Oommen presided over the function. Secretary Antony Philip, Convener AP Babu Nedumudi, PT Radhakrishnan, KP Francis, Thomas Mathew, Treasurer Joseph Zachariah, NT Pillai attended the function. This was followed by variety entertainment programme of music and dance.



Book release of *Mazhavil Pottukal*

Bharatholsavam

■ Bharatholsavam, a national folk festival was organised by Bassein Kerala Samajam during its 57th annual celebrations on February 17, 18 and 19. Noted Malayalam film star Ambika inaugurated the folk festival on February 17, 'Mazhavil Pottukal' a book of poems by Mrs Mini Thomas was released at the hands of Dr Muse Marry

George, Professor, UC College Aluva on February 18, at Sai Nagar Grounds at 5.30 pm on February 18. Film actor Lalu Alex and Sajith Kumar, Director, South Zone Cultural Centre, attended the closing ceremony on February 19. On February 17 prizes were distributed to winners of BKS sports arts competitions and there was a procession

of folk arts of ten Indian states by 150 artistes from BKS School to Sai Nagar Municipal Grounds. On February 19 there was Naadan Pattu programme by Sudhakaran & team from Thavam Gramavedi Kannur. There were folk dance performances of different Indian states on all the three days.



Participating artistes of the Mohini Attam & Bharata Natyam Competition Grand Finale held at Chinchwad Malayali Samajam Kerala Bhavan, Chinchwad with the judges, Kalashree Nambisan, Mumbai, Krishnan -Payyanur and Smt Raghavan - Pune.



ASTOUNDING UNIVERSE

- Pushpa Krishnakumar & Tessy Paul

*"Then was neither non-existence nor existence:
There was no realm of air, no sky beyond it.
Death was not then, nor was there anything immortal:
No sign was there, the Day's and Night's divider.
Darkness there was: at first concealed in darkness.
This all was indiscriminated chaos.
All that existed was void and formless:
By the great power of warmth was born that One."*
(Hymn on the origin of Universe from the Sacred

Rigveda)

This would be very much in line with our present understanding of the birth of our Universe in the Big Bang. Different theories propounded different versions to the birth of the Universe: all theories ultimately meeting at one focal point i.e., the beginning. This theory is the leading explanation about how the universe began. At its simplest, it talks about the universe as we know it starting with a small singularity, then inflating over the next 13.8 billion years to the cosmos that we know today. Much of what we understand about the Big Bang Theory comes from mathematical theory and models. Astronomers can, however, see the "echo" of the expansion through a phenomenon known as the cosmic microwave background. Big Bang, the well accepted hypothetical theory credits this beginning to the First explosion that occurred in the vast expanse of nothingness, which later resulted into the birth of different elements in different forms of matter and ultimately to different forms of life on the habitable planet - Earth.

Should science take all the credit for this marvellous discovery? Or does the seed of this mystic discovery lie in the various philosophies advocated by the wise men of the yore?

75 year old Mr Mohanraj from India, Mrs. Nenet, a 50 year old home maker from Egypt, 12 year old Singer, Ms Tabita from Israel and Mst Alex, a 4 year old cherubic child from Florida are world citizens of different nations; having their unique distinct personalities and identities, and yet they are bonded to each other with the same string of

consciousness that manifested the atomic and the sub-atomic elements of life. Isn't this a mystery? Well, we are living in a world of mystery or to be more precise; in a mysterious Universe.

In the words of Dr Neil De Grasser Tyson,

"The most astounding fact [about the universe] is the knowledge that the atoms that comprise life on Earth, the atoms that make up the human body, are traceable to the crucibles that cooked light elements into heavy elements in their core under extreme temperatures and pressures.

These stars, the high mass ones among them, went unstable in their later years. They collapsed and then exploded, scattering their enriched guts across the galaxyguts made of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen and all the fundamental ingredients of life itself."

Our Universe exists the way it is, with all the particles, forces, interactions, structures and the unique history of how it all came about. It is a matter of surprise, but a bitter fact that the whole Universe is self sustained.

When we look up at the night sky and know that, we are part of this universe, we are in this universe, but perhaps more important than both of those facts is that the universe is in us.

It is a well known fact that everybody's nature and attributes are different, each body's behaviour system is provided as well as controlled by nature which is like a builtin-program. Though unique, every biotic and the abiotic component is compelled to function according to its natural attribute and innate quality and yet they are governed by a common life principle which the scriptures term it 'Consciousness'. This is the most astounding fact of reality that the entire universe, on all scales, in all places and all times OBEYS the same fundamental laws of nature.

From the weakest, lowest frequency photon of light, the largest galaxy ever assembled, from the unstable atoms of Uranium decaying in the Earth's core to the neutral hydrogen



Dr Neil De Grasser Tyson

atoms forming for the first time 46 billion light years away, the laws that everything in this Universe are the same. Gravitation, electro-magnetism, and the strong and weak nuclear forces are the same wherever and whenever you go. The particles that exist (manifested) and can exist (unmanifested) and their properties are the same. The rules that govern the entire system are the same.

Imagine an existence where nature behaves randomly and unpredictably, where gravity turns on and off on a whim, where the Sun could simply stop burning its fuel for no apparent reason, where the atoms that formed you could spontaneously cease to hold together! It is this astounding fact that allows us to delve into science, and to learn something meaningful, making science a useful tool for learning about

this Universe, a place where the forms of that matter and energy occupying it can change, where the space time itself that we all exist in, can change, but the fundamental laws - that everything is subject to are Constant i.e., The Supreme Word of God (Uni Verse).

Humanity is awakened to righteousness when the Eternal Word gets manifested in the human life and darkness gives way to Light, clearing the path for wisdom, to establish her supremacy. Men who seek her, become successful in exploring the unexplored and lead on to become great inventors, discoverers and scientists, immortalized in the annals of history. The order of Truth is established and it begins to reign for Eternity.

*Om Asato Maa Sad-Gamaya |
Tamaso Maa Jyotir-Gamaya |
Mrtyor-Maa Amrtam Gamaya |
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||*

Meaning:

- 1: Om, (O Lord) Keep me not in the Unreality (of the bondage of the Phenomenal World), but lead me towards the Reality (of the Eternal Self),
- 2: (O Lord) Keep me not in the Darkness (of Ignorance), but lead me towards the Light (of Spiritual Knowledge),
- 3: (O Lord) Keep me not in the (Fear of) Death (due to the bondage of the Mortal World), but lead me towards the Immortality (gained by the Knowledge of the Immortal Self beyond Death),
- 4: Om, (May there be) Peace, Peace, Peace (at the three levels - Adidaivika, Adibhautika and Adhyatmika).

(The writers of this article are teachers of The N M W S High School, Rifle Range, Ghatkopar W)

Aksharaslokam

Once wife of Dr P K V Varier gave a copy of the new book written by her mother in law to Premji, the poet cum actor. He sent his appreciation in the following verse.

അല്ലെ തോഴി നിനക്കു കത്തെഴുതുവാ-
നാശിപ്പതുണ്ടെങ്കിലും
തെല്ലേതാനിടകിട്ടുകില്ലതിന് ഞാൻ
കൃത്യാന്തരാത്യാകുലൻ
അല്ലേറുംവരെ വേല ചെയ്തൊരുവിധം
വീടെത്തിയാൽ വീണുടൻ
വല്ലേടത്തുമൊരിത്തിരിയ്ക്കുതല ചായ്-
ക്കാനേ നിനയ്ക്കു നരൻ.

നീയിനാൾ പിരിയുന്നപോതു
തന്നോരുനൽപ്പുസ്തകം
ഭൃയിഷ്യശ്രമജീവിതത്തിനിടയിൽ
വായിച്ചു വായിച്ചു ഞാൻ
വായിൽത്തോന്നിയതോതിടുനതിവനെ-
ന്നോതായ്ക നേരാണോരേ
സ്ത്രീയിൽ കാണുവതില്ല നമ്മൾ ഇത്രമേൽ
പാണ്ഡിത്യവും പാകവും

ഉത്സാഹപ്രദമാം കുടുംബഭരണ-
ക്ലേശങ്ങളാലിയിടയ്-
ക്കുത്സാഹം കുറവാണെന്നിക്കു കവിതാ-
നിർമ്മാണകാര്യങ്ങളിൽ
സാഹിത്യപ്രിയ, കാവ്യരചനാ-
മർമ്മജ്ഞനെന്നമ്മയി-
ന്നുത്സാഹദായകമായൊരൻ വികൃതി ക-
ണ്ടെന്നോതുമെന്തോ കഥ!

MAN WITH NO SHADOW



C P Krishnakumar

■ It was unbelievable, till I saw it in the broad day light, and convinced myself beyond any doubt, that there can be someone without a shadow.

In the morning, we travel in the same metro train and alight at the same station.

All office towers are on the same side of the metro station. We walk together through the skywalk for about ten minutes. He takes the exit number three and I proceed to exit number five.

I do not know whether he is working or having own business. I didn't care to know from which station he boards the train. I never met him on my way back from office, on the skywalk, in the station or in the metro train.

After stepping down from the skywalk, my shadow follows me till the commerce center tower, where my office is on the 10th floor. In the evening I follow my black shadows till the sky walk. Though my wrist watch and mobile phone's digital display show the accurate time, I enjoy estimating the time looking at the length of my shadow. As weeks and months pass by and the seasons change, the length of the shadow keeps varying. Correlating the date, time and the length of the shadow is a mental arithmetic that I enjoy. In absence of a measuring tape, the length of the floor tiles and the small rectangular design marked on the tiles are the readily available means to measure the length of the shadow.

Being fellow passengers, many a times we sat next to each other in the metro train. Sometimes stood in the crowded compartment, facing each other. Reading seems to be his hobby, and whenever he gets a place to sit, he opens some book and start reading. He never uses a mobile, tablet or Personal computer for book reading. When I was on next seat I did peep and noticed that, he read classics. Sometimes they were translation from French, Sanskrit, Greek etc.....

The very first time we talked was on

a day when heavy rain halted the metro train services for a while and the passengers got panicky. No one could leave the train. Sharing their fear and anxiety with people around was a way to reduce the mental tension. After some time there was an announcement in the train that due to heavy downpour the bus and taxi services in the city are affected. Metro trains will be running late. Pumping station is doing the best to clear a waterlogged section of the rails.

As a typhoon was in the offing, I decided not go to office on that day. While returning home, I saw him in the same compartment. We talked about the possible big breakdown of the metro system and the inconvenience of so many of our fellow passengers living in the suburbs. We touched upon topics related to eco system, urban development and disaster management. While getting out from the train, I made a passive remark "Will have a cappuccino from the star bucks in the station?" His response was quick and spontaneous. "I too thought the same thing. Why don't we have coffee together?"

We sat across the table and continued talking on subjects like global warming, carbon emission and so on. Except each other's name nothing more transpired on the personal information. For next few days we did not see each other. That did not matter for me, but was a concern for him.

When we again met in the metro train, he told me about a mishap happened to him on that rainy day, and his short hospitalization. I felt sorry for him. And felt a bit guilty. But for my invitation for a cup of coffee with me the accident would not have happened.

On that day instead of taking the exit number three of the sky walk, he accompanied me up to exit number five. We talked about weather, economics etc.

Two little worlds started communicating.

One, a woman, separated from her first love, who engrosses herself in,

fashion, music, dance, painting, wine and good food.

The other, a bachelor with romantic dreams. He loved reading, drama, painting and philosophy.

While in an art gallery he said, "Passion is restless in the colors and radiate to the absorbing minds."

My reply was a stunned look. A look of desire, and helplessness to control the passion.

That evening we had excellent French red wine and grilled beef at a Korean restaurant.

While walking to office, in the morning, wild and fascinating imaginations followed me. On way back from office instead of my shadows, I followed colorful dreams.

I looked for his image, across a glass partition at the metro station. For my eyes, a colorful experience.

It was not due to any philosophical talk from him. Love brings so much color in a woman's life, and no shadow is relevant now.

It was annual get together of our office. Meant strictly for staff. No one is permitted to bring any guest or family member for the party. Still, I got a special permission to bring my boyfriend.

For men bow tie was part of the dress code. And he wore the one I bought for him two days ago. He looked the most elegant and smart guys among all the men. Women took their wine glasses and came to the center stage to dance with him. I was so possessive that I did not allow any woman to hold on to his arms for more than five minutes. For me it was not a party, but a heavenly experience.

Next morning was as usual. We met in the metro train. Sat next to each other. My head was on his shoulder. For enjoying the sweet thoughts and dreams, I kept my eyes closed. Still talking some naughty things in between, to take his attention away from the book he read.

On that morning too, while walking to office tower from the exit of the walk way, I did not notice my shadow. Instead, colorful imaginations followed

me, all the way.

While going to the pantry, within our office, I saw other women talking in a hush.

I could really make out that some of them were talking about me and my boyfriend.

I know, they must be jealous of me, and some of them may have even eyed a friendship with my boyfriend.

I felt so proud and happy. Their jealousy enhanced my self-esteem. Though I was physically there, my emotions were flying high. For the first time I thought I am much superior to all this women around me.

It was not any woman, but a male colleague who came to me and asked "Are you dating the guy who came with you last evening?"

I don't want to say no. But saying "Yes" is not really true. We enjoyed some outing and the regular companionship in the metro train. Though I love him, he is yet to show any indication of proposing to me. After last evening, everyone in my office may be thinking something beyond, and I do not want to change that.

"Really handsome guy. Don't you think so?" I feel so lucky, that after my divorce, I got such a good guy."

My colleague was simply listening. However he did not show any eagerness to listen more. He took a cup of coffee from the coffee maker and went to his seat.

During lunch break also, I saw my colleagues talking about my boyfriend. But this time, I overheard their concern for me in that relationship. Before leaving the office, I went to the pantry to put an empty paper cup in the trash bin, a woman gave a hint on the point they discussed about my boyfriend.

"Man with no shadow". Initially those words did not strike me. But when I understood more from them, I was shocked.

After the dance on the center of the hall, a few pairs danced to some special bands. At a time only a pair was on stage. The colorfully dressed dancing couple, and a little bigger, black shadow of them on the white background was the effect of a special lighting arrangement. When my turn came the shadow of is of the bow tie that moved along with my dark shadow. Noticed by those present, someone said, man with no shadow, and many repeated it.

As light cannot pass through an opaque body, shadow of that object is

POEM



വി വി അച്യുതൻ

ആദ്യാനുരാഗം

നിൻമോഹനരൂപം മനസ്സിൽ തെളിയാത്ത
 നിമിഷങ്ങളില്ല, ദിനങ്ങളുമങ്ങനെ;
 എത്ര ഋതുകൾ കഴിഞ്ഞാലുമെന്മനം
 മറക്കാ; ഞാനാദ്യത്തെ ദർശനം തേ!
 കണ്ടില്ല നാം പിന്നെയന്യോന്യമെങ്കിലും
 കാൺമു ഞാൻനിൻരൂപമെന്നുള്ളിൽ നിത്യവും.
 ആയിരം പൂർണ്ണേന്ദു കാണാനിരിക്കവേ
 ആയിരമാദിത്യശോഭ നീ നൽകീ മേ!
 ആദ്യാനുരാഗമാണെങ്കിലും നീ നിന്റെ
 ആദ്യത്തെ ചുംബനമെന്നനിക്കേകിടും?
 മോഹങ്ങളെല്ലാം മരവിച്ചുവെങ്കിലും
 മോഹിനീ, നിന്നെ മറക്കാൻ കഴിയുമോ?

formed. That is simple physics. On the stage, dancer is the opaque body. If my shadow appeared and the same light pass through his body without any hindrance.....!. I don't want to believe them.

While going back home, I followed my dark shadow till the staircase to the sky walk. I am no more in the world of dreams. The brittle tiles, strong pillars, glass wall and moving train. All real things matter to me. I want to see whether there is a shadow of the man standing at the glass wall. Unlike yesterday, now I am not searching for the colorful image. But for the man who, according to my colleagues do not have a shadow. He was very much there. With a bright smile, he moved forward to hug me, as usual. I stood like an ice statue. Then tried to bring smile on my face. In the light setting of the metro station there are not too many shades or shadows. I couldn't see even my own shadow. I invited him for a drink, at the

coffee bar in my office tower. We walked through the skyway. I was looking for some shadows. After getting down from exit number three we were walking against the sunlight. I looked backwards and saw my long dark shadow. I looked behind him. Looked again and againI couldn't see the shadow. I stopped walking and stared at him. He too stopped and looked at me. I did not utter a single word. I raised my right hand and pointed my finger towards my shadow, and continued staring at him.

His face turned pale, eyes bulged. He tried to say something. But no words came out. He started to run. I followed him two or three strides. But then stopped and looked carefully whether he is having any shadow. He moved on with long strides, and I stood astonished and breathless.

Minutes later, I turned back. Looked at my long dark shadow. I sat down, and touched my shadow. No fantasy. No dream. ■



AGE GRACEFULLY



Dr. (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

Most of us likes to look beautiful in old age. In fact women of older generation like our great grandmothers, and grandaunts had beautiful and flawless skin, (without going to beauty parlours!). But now a days there are many factors in our environment which are hazardous to our skin like exposure to sunlight, air pollution, chemicals in water, artificial lights, preservatives in food etc.

Skin protects our body against heat, cold and injury. It is our turn to look after our skin which envelops our body and protect it from harmful factors. Our skin gets wrinkles as we age. Remember that however much you try to hide with makeup, the skin betrays your age. So skin care should begin at a young age to get a youthful skin in old age. Cleansing, toning and moisturising are the essential steps in skin care.

Cleansing

Removal of makeup by cleaning face before sleep at night is a must. Cleansing helps to remove dead cells, dirt, grime, dust particles and residues of makeup. If these and the surplus oil are not removed, the debris will block pores in the skin leading to whiteheads, blackheads and later pimples on the face.

It is important to choose the type of face wash and cleanser according to

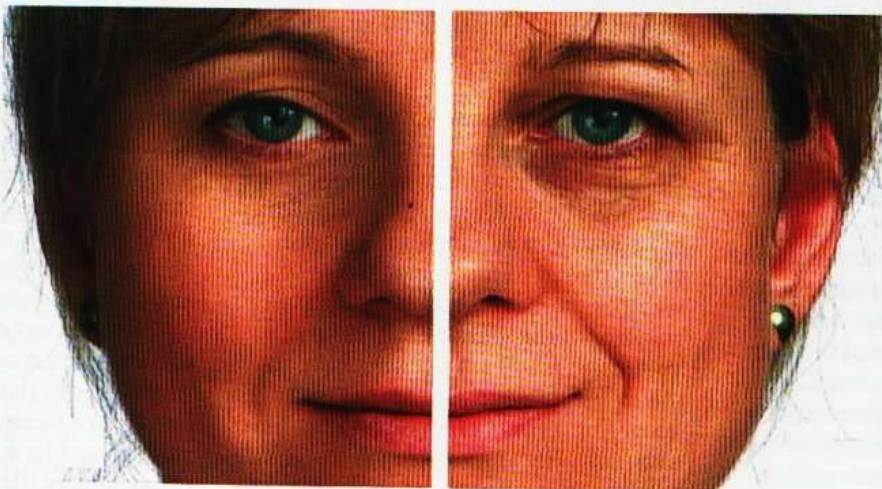
excessive scrubbing. Don't use scrubs and peels daily. They can be used maximum 3 times a week. Avoid facial scrubs made from walnut or apricot shells as they can be abrasive and cause micro injuries on facial skin.

Toning

Toning after cleansing helps to remove oil and the residues of cleanser, restore PH level of skin and temporarily tighten the pores. It leaves you with a tingling feeling of freshness. It is better to use alcohol-free and non-drying type of astringents for toning. Use of rose water or even a splash of cold water is an excellent skin freshener.

Moisturising

Moisturiser helps to keep your skin smooth, supple and young. Women with oily skin also can use moisturizer. If you have oily skin, go for oil free and water-based moisturisers. Moisturiser acts as a barrier and helps to keep the moisture on your skin protecting it from



your skin type. Don't wash your face with cleanser more than thrice a day unless you are out in the sun all day or sweating profusely. Over cleansing and rubbing are harmful to the skin. Avoid

dehydration. It is advised to use moisturiser regularly. During winter it is better to use oil based moisturiser often. During summer, use water-based moisturizer sparingly.

Steaming

Steaming also helps to cleanse as the steam penetrates deep into follicles of skin. It also increases cell metabolism and blood circulation. It softens dead cells and unblock pores helping excess oil to flow out more easily. Steaming should not be done daily but only once in a week or once in 2 weeks depending on the skin type. Steaming can be done after cleansing and before massage. Too frequent steaming result in enlarged pores. If your skin is too dry or sensitive, avoid steaming. Instead, you can use a hot towel over your face for about 10 minutes or till the pores open up.

Massage

A good massage increases blood circulation to the skin and leaves your skin toned and nourished. Use only lighter movements while massaging face, avoid rubbing, pulling and tugging. It is better to go to a trained



beautician for face massage. If you have severe acne, fever or any recent scar tissue, avoid massage as it will aggravate the condition.

Avoiding Wrinkles

As a person ages, the skin loses its elasticity and muscles on the face lose their firmness and these in turn lead to deep lines and folds called 'wrinkles'. Fine lines around eyes ("crow's feet")

are caused by smiling or grimacing. To avoid wrinkles and to tone up your facial muscles, do facial exercises and avoid grimacing but don't stop smiling. Smiling gives you the right kind of wrinkles.

A glowing complexion is a thing of beauty. A healthy skin is an asset to your appearance and self-esteem. So look after your skin and age gracefully.

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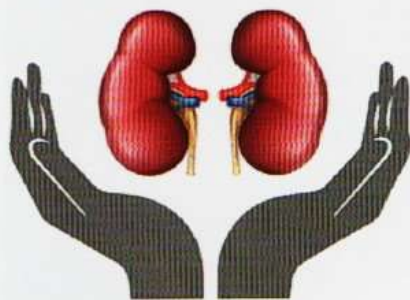
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PROTECT YOUR KIDNEYS

Dr (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

Kidneys are very important organs in our life. They produce hormones, help in production of red blood cells, filter blood and remove toxic substances, absorb minerals, produce urine, maintain a healthy acid-alkaline balance in our body, help to maintain blood pressure and activate Vitamin D for healthy bones. Gradual damage to the kidneys may go unnoticed and when finally discovered, it can be too late.

14 March is being observed as 'World Kidney Day'. Kidney disease is a serious and life threatening medical problem. If you have Diabetes, Hypertension or both you have to be careful and get regular medical checkups. Keep a close watch over your blood sugar and B.P. Kidney disease can be passed through genes. So if you have family history of kidney diseases, you have to be more careful.

Symptoms in early stages of kidney disease

There may be common and different types of symptoms in early stages of kidney disease.

For e.g.: Tiredness, Swelling on face, ankles and feet, changes in urination (dark coloured urine, blood in urine, pain and difficulty in passing urine, change in the amount and frequency of urination etc.), nausea and vomiting, problems in sleep and digestion, loss of appetite, hiccups, back pain, muscle cramps, breathlessness, skin rashes, itching, unstable BP or high BP etc.

If you have any of these symptoms (especially if you are a patient of Diabetes and /or Hypertension) consult a doctor and start treatment as soon as possible.

Some habits that can damage your Kidneys

- 1) Alcohol: Consumption of too much alcohol can damage your liver and kidneys.
- 2) Smoking: Smoking can lead to narrowing and hardening of blood vessels (Atherosclerosis) which in turn can affect blood supply to all important organs including kidney.
- 3) Too much caffeine: Consuming



too much of caffeine (in coffee, cola and soft drinks) can lead to kidney damage.

4) Lack of Exercise: Exercise helps to protect Kidneys. By maintaining a healthy body weight, exercise will reduce your chance of kidney stones.

5) Vit B6 deficiency: Deficiency of Vitamin B6 in diet increases the risk of kidney stones.

6) Magnesium deficiency: If your diet does not contain adequate magnesium, Calcium cannot get properly absorbed. So the overload of calcium can lead to kidney stones.

7) Too much Sodium: Consumption of too much of sodium in the form of salt can raise your BP and lead to Kidney damage.

8) Pain Killers: Taking painkillers too frequently and in high dose can lead to kidney damage. Don't buy and take painkiller tablets on your own from medical shops. Take them only as per doctor's advice.

9) Treatment of Hypertension and Diabetes: These two medical conditions, if untreated, can lead to kidney damage. So take medicines (prescribed by doctor) regularly.

10) Not emptying bladder: Retaining urine in bladder is harmful to health. You must go to toilet when nature calls. Don't postpone urination. Retaining urine regularly can increase the pressure on kidneys leading to renal failure or can cause incontinence.

Prevention

Kidney disease can be prevented to some extent by making life style changes and taking care of your diet.

Lifestyle Changes

- Avoid bad habits like smoking & drinking alcohol.
- Control your Hypertension and Diabetes taking regular medicines and doing regular medical checkups.
- Get active with more exercise. Avoid obesity, Exercise will help to keep your body weight normal thus preventing lifestyle diseases like Hypertension, Type 2 Diabetes, Heart diseases and high cholesterol.
- Take supplements of Calcium and Vit D as per doctor's advice.
- Avoid long term use of Painkillers and Steroids.

Nutrition

- Restrict your intake of salt.
- Take a low portion diet especially if you have symptoms of kidney disease.
- Don't starve
- Maintain healthy nutrition. Take a balanced diet.
- Fish, Chickpeas, beef liver, potatoes and non-citrus fruits are rich source of Vitamin B6, Avocado, green leafy vegetables, beans, seeds and nuts contain Magnesium. Have fruits like watermelon and apple.

Stay hydrated. Remember to drink 8 glasses of fluids including water daily. ■

ADDICTION AND NUTRITION



Dr Sujatha Nair

■ Alcohol and drug abuse /addiction can result in numerous and gross nutritional deficiencies that hamper the physical and mental health of the individual.

A healthy diet plays a major role in sustaining and improving the quality of life in recovery.

Alcohol and drug use can affect nutrition in the following ways

■ **Not eating** - drinking and using drugs causes a drop in appetite and at times they forget to eat.

■ **Eating insufficient** - Drinking /using drugs is given a priority over eating .

■ **Overeating** - at times there can be an increased appetite due to drug and alcohol use and the person eats unconsciously without an idea of satiety.

■ **Damage to organs** - Alcohol and drug abuse can result in damage to the liver, pancreas, stomach, intestinal linings which are all involved in the digestion, absorption and retention of nutrients in the body.

■ **Drop in Immunity** - The depletion of nutrients causes a fall in immunity making the person prone to various ailments

■ **Gastrointestinal disorders** - drop in glucose levels resulting in mental and physical imbalances.

Alcohol

Those addicted to alcohol have poor food intake. Either they do not eat at all in order to drink or eat a lot without awareness of satiety.

In both cases there is nutritional depletion as the body is busy processing the alcohol that needs to be metabolized before the food.

Alcohol results in inflammation of the gut and stomach lining resulting in indigestion, acid reflux, gastritis, malabsorption resulting in diarrhea and consequent dehydration.

Severe deficiencies of Thiamine, B12, B6 and Folic acid develop resulting in conditions like peripheral

neuritis, anemia, fatigue, headache, memory problems and Wernicke Korsakoff syndrome due to Thiamine deficiency.

Muscle wasting, immunity reduction happens making the person prone to ailments, and in Indians the most common ailment that afflicts a person when the immunity drops is Tuberculosis.

Chronic alcohol use can cause significant damage to the liver and pancreas which are involved in digestion of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, hormones and sugar balance thus causing an imbalance in them.

Opiates

Withdrawals from drugs like opium, heroin etc results in cramps and severe diarrhea preventing the person from eating resulting in dehydration and electrolyte imbalance. Eating carbohydrates and enough fluids will tide over this.

■ **Stimulants** - like amphetamines, MDMA, Crystal meth, cocaine

Stimulants keep the drug user awake for hours on end, hyperactive and kills the appetite whereby people do not eat for days. This results in malnutrition, electrolyte and hormonal imbalance leading to severe weight loss, muscle loss, alopecia, increased risk of infections, heart ailments, depression, apathy, confusion etc.

In treatment, eating more can result in an upset digest system as it is just getting used to food. this requires an experienced medical care. meals should be had in small portions.

Marijuana

Marijuana usage results in a ravenous appetite but for mainly junk food excessive consumption of which can result in obesity. Lack of any nourishment in junk food results in malnutrition also. There is a deficiency of omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids which can result in skin ailments like eczema, rash and other inflammatory processes. Healing of wounds is delayed and susceptibility to infections is

increased.

Diet during Treatment and Recovery

■ A craving for sweets develops in most people in recovery from addiction to alcohol and drugs, as sweets trigger the same dopamine reward pathway that are triggered by the substances in brain.

■ Exercise regularly- various yoga asanas aid in bringing the hormonal balance in the body and regain optimum organ functioning, regain physical and mental balance and core muscle tone. Start working out slowly being in connect with one's body as the existent muscle wasting and lack of tone if pushed into working out too soon and too hard will result in recurrent injuries.

■ Eat more complex carbs - Green vegetables, Whole grains and foods made from them, such as and whole-grain breads, rotis, Starchy vegetables such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, and pumpkin, Beans, lentils, and peas.

■ Eat small portions of frequent meals, the appetite will slowly improve.

■ There should be an increase in intake of fiber which will maintain gut health and proteins would help build muscles affected by alcohol and drug abuse.

■ Avoid or reduce Caffeine intake in the form of coffee or carbonated drinks.

■ Have plenty of water.

■ Taking supplements of vitamins and minerals are essential as they will help initially to replenish immediate deficiencies and then enable the body to function well.

Every treatment /rehab facility should have a good and nutritious diet provision with adequate opportunities to exercise. We at AH provide such an optimum blend of nutrition and physical and mental growth in a luxurious ambience. ■

For any clarifications contact
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Ramante Edenthottam

■ Ramante Edenthottam is being directed by Ranjith Sankar. Kunchacko Boban is the hero. Aju Varghese, Jojo George, Ramesh Pisharody, Muthumani are lending acting support. Main locations are Vagamon and Kochi. Ranjith Sankar himself produces this film for his Dreams and Beyond banner. Bijibal provides music.



Alamara

■ It is comedy film with Sunny Wein as hero. The story revolves round a cupboard received by the bridegroom after his marriage. Mithun Manuel Thomas directs this film that is being shot in Kochi and Bengaluru.



Careful

■ Careful is produced by Suresh Balaji and George Pais for Wide Angle Creations and V K Prakash directs it. Rajesh Jayaram writes the screenplay and Rajeev Nair its lyrics. Aravind Sankar provides the music. Well known classical dancer Sandhya Raju is the heroine and Vijay Babu is the hero. Aju Varghese, Asokan, Sreejith Ravi, Saiju Kurup, Parvathy Nambiar, Mukundan, Krishna Kumar, Jomol, Vineetkumar et al are also in the cast.

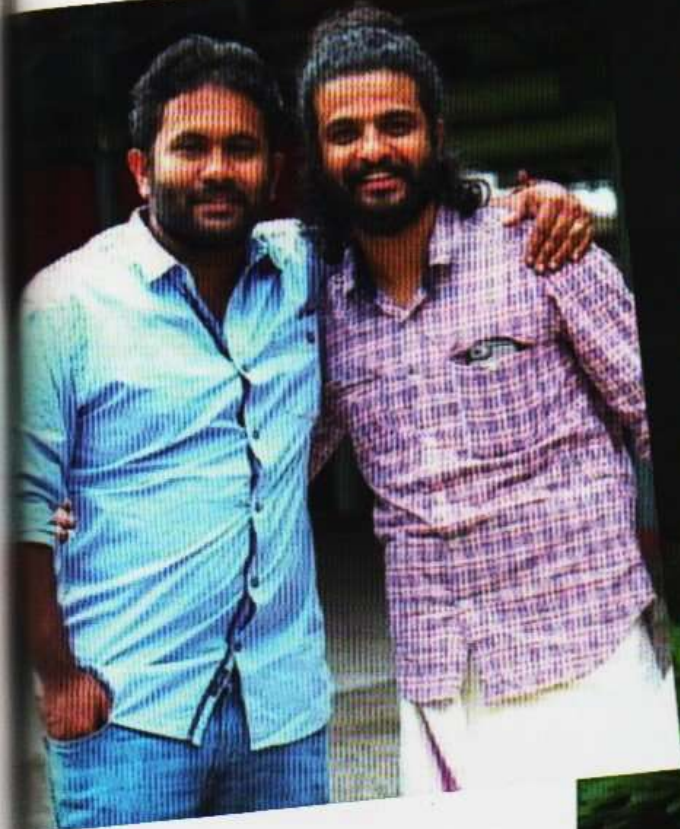
Sakhavinte Priyasakhi

■ It is based on the killing of comrade Sivaprasad. Amit Jolly, Sudhir Karamana and Sneha Saxena are the leading actors. Athira, Kalabhavan Shajohn, Salimkumar, Sunil Sukhada, Sivaji Guruvayur, Indrans, Anoop Chandran, Chembil Asokan, Kochupreman, Jaffwer Idukki, K T C Abdulla, Jolly Bastian, Nilambur Aysha and Kulappulli Leela are the other actors. Rafiq Ahmed, Alamkode Leelakrishnan and Siddiq Thamarasseri write the lyrics. Harikumar Hareram is the music composer.



Mohanlal with B Unnikrishnan

■ After a short interval Mohanlal and B Unnikrishnan are joining hands for a new film. In this high investment film, Vishal from Tamil and some actors from Telugu are also lending their support. Since Mohanlal has a few films in Telugu, Kannada and Tamil, he is a known face in these regions. So having a few actors from these languages would enable his films to be marketed in those languages also. In this film, Mohanlal is in the role of a retired police officer. After his failures with Madambi and Grand Master, Unnikrishnan is striving hard to change the wind with this film. He took more than two years to finalise the script of this films.



Lava Kusha

■ Giri Mano directs this new film whose screenplay is written by Neeraj Madhav, the young actor. Biju Menon, Neeraj Madhav and Aju Varghese are the main actors. Gopi Sundar is music director.

Film: Oru Vadakkan Veeragatha (1989)
 Lyrics: K Jayakumar
 Music: Bombay Ravi
 Singer: K S Chithra

കളരിവിളക്ക് തെളിഞ്ഞതാണോ

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 കാരിരുമ്പോടൊത്ത കൈക്കരുത്തും } (2)
 ശംഖു കടഞ്ഞ കഴുത്തഴകും
 മാനത്തു മാന്വുള്ളിപ്പോർച്ചുണങ്ങും (2)
 മാനത്തുനെങ്ങാനും വന്നതാണോ
 കുന്നത്ത് സൂര്യൻ ഉദിച്ചതാണോ

നാഗത്തളയിട്ട കാൽവടിയും ചൊവ്വൊത്ത } (2)
 ചേകോൻറെ മെയ്യഴകും
 പടകാളിമുറ്റം നിറഞ്ഞുനിൽക്കും
 അങ്കത്തളയുള്ള വിരനാരോ (2)
 മാനത്തുനെങ്ങാനും വന്നതാണോ
 കുന്നത്ത് സൂര്യൻ ഉദിച്ചതാണോ
 കളരിവിളക്ക് തെളിഞ്ഞതാണോ
 കൊന്നമരം പുത്തുലഞ്ഞതാണോ

Kalari vilakku thelinjathaano
 konna maram poothulanjathaano
 Maanathunnengaanum vannathaano (2)
 Kunnathu sooryan udichathaano (2)

Kaarirulotha mutiyazhakum
 kaarimbodocha kai karuthum } (2)
 Sanku kadanja kazhuthazhakum
 maarathu maampulli porchunangum (2)
 Maanathunnengaanum vannathaano
 Kunnathu sooryan udichathaano

Naaga thalayitta kaal vadivum chovvotha } (2)
 chekonte meyyazhakum } (2)
 Padakaali muttam niranju
 Anka thalayulla veeranaaro (2)
 Maanathunnengaanum vannathaano
 Kunnathu sooryan udichathaano
 Kalari vilakku thelinjathaano
 konna maram poothulanjathaano

Oru Vadakkan Veeragadha is a reinterpreted story of Aromal Chekavar and Unniyarcha, deviated from the oft heard version. In the Northern Ballads, Chandu is a traitor and Aromal is valorous while in this film their characters are reversed by the Script Writer M T Vasudevan Nair. The film was produced by P V Gangadharan for his Grihalakshmi Productions. It has Mammootty, Suresh Gopi, Caption Raju, Balan K Nair, V K Sreeraman, Madhavi, Geetha, Sukumari et al. The lyrics are written by K Jayakumar, former Chief Secretary

of Kerala and Kaithpram Damodaran Namboothiri while music is provided by Bombay Ravi. There are five songs (including Chandanalepasugandham, Indulekha Kanthurannu, Unniganapathi...) in the film rendered by K J Yesudas, K S Chithra and Ashalatha. The film received wide acclaim and bestowed with awards for Best Screenplay to M T and Best actor to Mammootty at the national and state levels. It was also chosen as the best film of the year by the state government.



Kerala in Mumbai

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