

Farewell to Sridevi

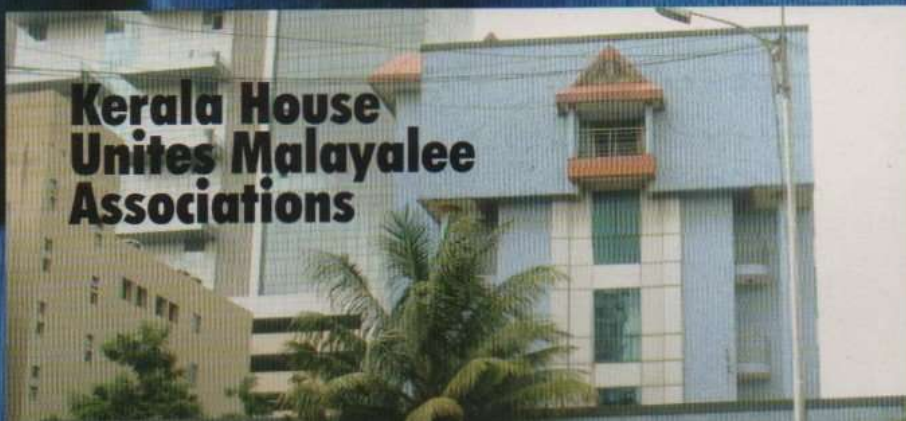
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Kerala in Mumbai

The Only English / Malayalam Monthly Magazine linking Mumbai Malayalees



RAAGALAYA & KIM AWARDS



**Kerala House
Unites Malayalee
Associations**

■ Kerala Budget ■ Natyanjali Dance Festival



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

8th Anniversary Special

I hasten to compliment the Editorial team behind the February 2018 (8th Anniversary Special) of Kerala in Mumbai which merits a Collector's Item.

I have been subscriber to Kerala in Mumbai right from its inception eight years ago. I should say that it maintains its consistency (if not improved) in quality- contents, presentation, the paper etc. Yet the 8th Anniversary special excels all and stands out with its uniqueness. Rare details unknown to many such as Lok Kerala Sabha, the Palestine issue, Reservations and so on were educative and revealing.

The story of Alamelu Mani is inspirational. It is hard to believe that Alamelu Mani, a girl from Matunga, now in her 80's and with a following of over thousand disciples world wide has gone hi-tech and is managing music classes through Skype! Raagalaya deserves compliments for recognizing and given her the life time award.. Hers is a clear case of dynastic excellence in music for five generations !! and still going strong !!!!.

The most revealing and educative story is "Love Jihad" which brought out many unknown facts of this most misunderstood, suspected, hated and all condemned system. Thanks to the story, the practice has been given respectability urging the readers to remove their bias and accept it as a new community development in the process of social evolution. The author has traced the historical evolution of mixed/intercaste marriages from Vedic times to date. It details the present attitude of authorities and the Courts which are still confusing.. Starting with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, it highlights the

success stories of quite a few high personalities (Justice Hidayatullah, Nawab of Pataudi, Sunil Dutt etc.) detailing successful mixed marriages with Muslims and who yet lived happily thereafter....indeed an indirect support and ammunition for Akhila alias Hadiya to fight her case now in the Supreme Court.

It is very heartening that of late more and more of new and young writers have started contributing to Kerala in Mumbai. I wish the magazine all the best.

Kudos once again.

Parur S.Ganesan,
Chembur

Time is precious

I have been a regular reader of the editorials in 'Kerala in Mumbai'. The latest one in the eighth anniversary special issue on the preciousness of time struck me as opportune. The episode of the late K P Kesava Menon's leaving the venue of the meeting, held in honour of Rajaji as the Governor General, when the latter did not arrive in time, was telling (It was of course, gracious of Rajaji to have met KPK later at the latter's residence). The editor has not spared the organisers of a recent meeting at Chembur of Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana, as one who has written a booklet on 'Time Management', I appreciate the criticism of the editor of the casual way the organisers went about their task. It seems that the conduct of the Loka Kerala Sabha in Thiruvananthapuram was equally lackadaisical. The editor's advice is 'Be professional and committed'.

Time should be taken by the

hindlock, as the English phrase goes. If one goes by the Editor's writings, he seems to set much store by the younger generation. He should continue to inspire the youngsters with admonitions on values such as honesty, truthfulness, efficiency in work (yoga), devotion to duty etc. More strength to his elbow and PEN which is mightier than the sword!

V Balachandran
Goregaon

Excellent Programme

Thank you very much for giving us a mesmerising evening.

Every moment was thoroughly enjoyed by my wife n me. Others too were seen immersed in the songs which were carefully selected from older to not too old and rendered beautifully and ably supported by you and your team. Saw you too were enjoying every moment though interacting with most guests. Overall it was a pleasure to have attended the function.

Thank you all for providing an excellent evening which will be cherished for a very long time.

Prabhakaran.Nair
Vrindavan Society Thane

Congratulations

8th Anniversary Special Issue continued to maintain the standard expected of you particularly in terms of content, layout and print. The article on Blockchain Technology by Aneishkumar is timely and he has brought out in detail the implications and relevance of this technology. Expecting to read many more such articles thru KIM. Wishing all the Best to you and KIM family.

C R Unny,
Mulund West.

Continued on page 54

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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KERALA HOUSE UNITES MALAYALI ASSOCIATIONS

The recent report of hiked rentals of meeting hall in Kerala House caused anger among Malayali Associations and Malayali veteran leaders. On this subject all of them are united and raised their voice in protest asking for a downward revision. Let's examine what we should do.

Satyanath

It started in trickle during the second half of the thirties of last century. The close contact of the working class of Kerala with similar status of people from the then Madras and Mysore states gave Malayalees enough information about the place situated along the same seafront, thereby providing identical climate unlike Delhi and Calcutta. They also heard that this developing city had many industrial houses and faced absolute shortage of people with basic knowledge of English and typing as the local people were not keen to acquire those skills. Further, local people were reluctant to put in hard work and hence not interested in a city life. The situation was quite ideal for those who failed to gain white collar jobs after passing matriculation in native place. Then the migration started especially from Cochin and Travancore regions which had better educational

facilities. Malabar was lacking in educational facilities those days and was less populated. Migration started to Malabar also from the southern regions but it was in search of land for agriculture.

We heard that representatives of various companies were waiting at Victoria Terminus to grab people landing there, offering them office work. Soon South Indian hotels were opened in Fort area, Matunga-Dadar area, Chembur etc and for those working in industrial units thronged to South Indian Mess which offered food at affordable rates. More and more people came and they were relatives and friends of earlier migrants. Once the migrants found jobs, they joined institutions to gain degrees and diplomas in their own fields or the fields they felt, offered better results and future.

It is a natural trait among Malayalees to form associations to get

camaraderie, to exchange ideas and also to indulge in their favourite passions such as cultural activities and reading. Many well known writers and artists like Vaikkom Mohammad Basheer, S K Pottekkat, Malayattoor Ramakrishnan, Raja Ravi Varma et al were among them. However many of them left this city after some time for reasons of family problems at home, lack of satisfactory accommodation for family in the city or unsatisfied with what they got here.

Majority of these migrant Malayalees opted to settle down here as condition at home was not much conducive to progress in life. They gradually felt the need of forming associations and the first one was Bombay Kerala Samajam, the name later changed to Bombay Keraleeya Samajam following the suggestion of poet Vallathol Narayana Menon during his visit to the city and the Samajam office.

BKS was truly a secular association and religion, caste, personal ideologies found no place in its activities. Camaraderie was at its zenith those days. Literature and dance and musical forms the Malayalees were fond of, flourished.

Malayalees are known to cultivate friendship faster but are also known to split the relations on imaginary grounds. Like Kerala Congress, they split and grow and merge and the history repeats. The first conflict came when the Socialist ideologists found the growth was inadequate to their liking and soon ideological split occurred. Many discontinued their memberships as they were not interested in an ideological war. The lot that left formed its own association. We need not take names of those people as they are no more alive. Soon the split was based on socialism and communism and rival associations were created. The venom spread further and associations based on religion, caste and creed were formed and the mother organisation started losing its prominence. However it succeeded in establishing its office on a land it bought. Now Malayalees have grown stronger as they formed units for their caste, sub caste, religion and sub-sects for Hindus, Muslims and Christians. The secularism is present only in public talk.

Looking back

We followed other communities from other South Indian states but did



■ The most important aspect of this problem is to find a positive solution instead of raising voices. Since the then PWD Minister P J Joseph laid the

foundation stone of the House late in the evening in 1997, I have been working with Kerala House till recently on behalf of various organisations. Even after the foundation laying ceremony the work came to a halt and we resorted to agitations. A 10 member Kerala House Action Committee including Sabu Daniel, Valsan Moorkoth and me, was also formed. We called on the Kerala CM and the then Tourism Minister Kodyeri Balakrishnan and submitted a memorandum also. As a result the work was resumed and it was inaugurated on December 10, 2006. Later in 2009, under Navi Mumbai Co-ordination Committee four of us met the CM in Kerala House and submitted another memorandum to reduce the rent of the Hall as well as rooms for registered Malayali cultural associations, to keep up the earlier promise. Though we resorted to other agitations and several memoranda, the promise was never kept.

I have been instrumental to book the Hall for more than 20 occasions

on behalf of All India Malayali Association. I have been in touch with the political wing of the GAD on a regular basis. We understand that the Principal Secretary of GAD is behind the move to raise the rent of the Hall. The reasons given are that the strength of the staff would have to be increased and the rent in Delhi and Mumbai should be on par.

If the rent hike is not withdrawn immediately, we have to treat this matter as urgent and proceed with protestations as a unified force.

A draft of the memorandum to be submitted is given below.

"The vast crowd assembled at the inaugural ceremony of Kerala House had a long lasting dream that this House would facilitate the cultural activities of various Samajams. The leaders who addressed the gathering also reflected this dream and promised to stick to it. For an average Samajam, this rent of Rs.30,000 is beyond their capacity and therefore it should be reduced at least by 50%. Facility for hall booking also should be made simpler." Loka Kerala Sabha is formed as a linking mechanism between Kerala Govt and people living outside Kerala. We have our General Secretary to represent us: Adv Prema. I have spoken to her and she has worked out a brief in writing as well as to represent to the concerned to stop increase in meeting hall tariff.

K T Nair



Protest dharna at Kerala House



■ Kerala House should be ideally a Cultural Centre of Kerala with good library which consists of old and latest books from

writers of Malayalam literature, auditorium to conduct meetings and programmes of Malayalee Associations in Mumbai and rest of Maharashtra with nominal rent (minimum rent to cover electricity and upkeep charges only), Liaison Facility to avail all services of Govt. of Kerala, Kerala Tourism information/bookings etc., A Wedding Hall with reasonable rate for hall as well as Kerala Feast. Artists and programmes from Kerala to be booked through Kerala House only so Samajams can organise the programmes at a reasonable rate.

E. Ramachandran,
Gen. Secretary,
Mulund Kerala Samajam,
Mob.9819002955

not copy their positive aspects. Andhrites, Tamilians and the Kannadigas also formed their associations. They had a set of agenda to work on. They established schools, social groups and own halls that could be used for conducting weddings and cultural programmes and the people belonging to their sect always preferred to utilise them despite their short comings. This attitude helped the infrastructure grow. They also helped the business enterprises started by their societal comrades. All of us know how they run it. We hardly hear any unsavoury moves among them. On the contrary Malayalees hardly have anything to boast of, barring the Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti that runs several institutions under SNMS. They are continuously active throughout the year. A few Malayali organisations also run some educational institutions going upto Junior College and a large number of institutions are run by trusts formed by Malayalees but controlled by a few, more or less as family venture.

Shanmukhananda Hall was well known as the largest auditorium in Asia but an unfortunate fire accident forced it



Mumbai Malayalees addressing the media

to remain shut for years. When reopened, it was forced to keep its standards to match its expenditures and growth rate. Several Malayali organisations patronise the auditoriums owned by the private bodies from other South Indian states at competitive rates but we failed to open our own Auditorium. Like in all other activities, we wanted the government to come forward and provide infrastructure at the cost of the state so that we can enjoy it, though we hardly contribute anything to the growth of the state.

There are several successful businessmen among Malayalees of this cosmopolitan city but hardly any of them started any units in their native state, except sales outlets. In private discussions, we often hear their criticism about the negative approach of the work force in Kerala. We also know that several entrepreneurs abandoned units in Kerala or shifted the

units to outside the state. A few years ago, in a private talk with a leftist minister, this matter was brought up at his insistence and he agreed that this situation existed there but their mouths could not be opened for political reasons.

Kerala is a literate state and the people are intelligent and capable of working hard but they carry a burden of false impressions. Often they are worse than the capitalists. A bit story comes to the mind. Once the US President Abraham Lincoln was engaged in conversation with a visiting dignitary and to save time Lincoln started polishing his shoes. Surprised, the guest asked the President, "Mr President, Are you polishing your shoes?" Lincoln is reported to have responded, "Whose shoes are you polishing?"

This writer knows several people working in Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkatta and they are closely connected



Kerala House to be Affordable to Keralites

■ Kerala House was a long pending dream of Keralites and Malayali Samajams of

Mumbai and nearby areas. When it was inaugurated Keralites and Malayali Samajams in particular were really happy and felt proud. However, the increase of rent brought total dissatisfaction among the Keralites in Mumbai. Many of us felt that it is a part of welfare measure to Keralites living in this part of the country and can utilize the facilities at

an affordable cost. Ever since the rent was increased, the hope of many Malayali Samajams is shattered as it becomes unaffordable.

In view of the above, concerned authorities should bring down the rent of the Hall to Rs 10,000/-per six hours. The booking facilities should be made online and on first come first basis. Let it be a welfare measure for Keralites and Malayali Samajams for educational, cultural, marriage and other social activities.

**Colonel (Prof)
Dr Kavumbayi Janardhanan**

with former palaces and land lord families in Kerala but they were never prepared to work in Kerala. We also know a particular case in which a blue blooded Asst Manager of a private bank resigned from his job when the son of one earlier servant of his house was transferred to his bank as Manager. We have a lot of blue blood to be shelled out.

Kerala House

History of Kerala House is a long one. When other regional associations were enjoying the fruits of their collective work, Malayalees always found crying for crumbs from their state that they left decades ago. Many of them do not even have any asset there unless they procured in recent times. When they were hard pressed for money to expand their business or upgrade their accommodation facilities, circumstances compelled them to dispose of their share in Kerala. A few of them later acquired properties there for various reasons but hardly anyone moved there for living. In that sense, the present Malayalees of Maharashtra are not even eligible to be called Pravasis. Pravasis are those who move to other places for eking out a living and once that task is over, return to the place that they left long ago. Lion share of Malayalees in Mumbai are not Pravasis in the true sense as we are permanently settled here. Yet we want all the rights a normal Malayali is enjoying in Kerala. We want special treatment for starting business ventures there, voting rights there, financial assistance such as pension etc to the

poor Malayalees living here, recognition for the contributions done here in fields of art, literature, education etc.

The recent developments in our native state are alarming by any standards. The retired employees of the government and semi government are not receiving their pensions for months and a few of them even committed suicide. The government is doing everything that they could to alleviate the situation but that is not being adequate. The administrative expenditure is mounting, the government is borrowing money from various sources such as co-operative banks, public bonds are being issued, development projects already proposed are waiting to be implemented, subsidies for unnecessary projects not contributing anything to the state etc all are dragging the government in different directions. Any expenditure without adequate income is suicidal. Any economist would tell us that the ultimate liability is to be paid by the people whether they contribute to the exchequer or not.

While the state governments in Kerala are changing every five years without failure, the state debt is mounting. Have the people residing there done anything to arrest it? Can the government or the public stop the illegal but frequent hartals so that the economy would improve? Political parties in their greed to govern can offer any sop to the people and the latter is embracing it unabashedly. Have our people lost all the pride they were wearing on the collars? Ministers



■ My views on this subject are as under:

Substantial increase in the rent that too all of a sudden is

absolutely unwarranted. One can understand a little bit of increase. As the very name "KERALA HOUSE" suggests, this building is the prestige of Navi Mumbai, rather "Mumbai" and apparently it is meant for catering to the social and cultural life of Keralites in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. Because of this drastic step, if the various associations have to depend upon others in spite of access to this building will be a shame and will be unbecoming of the authorised committee of the concerned house. I fully agree with the protests of the various associations in this connection and I am sure that the Keralites of Navi Mumbai and Mumbai City and suburbs will definitely support them to arrive at an amicable solution. IN CASE THEY DECIDE TO RENT OUT THE PREMISES ACCORDING TO AVAILABILITY TO OTHERS i.e., OTHER THAN KERALITES FOR THEIR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS, THEY CAN DO SO BY CHARGING COMPARATIVELY HIGHER RENT.

Unny Damodaran



■ Non resident Keralites were and are milking cows for Kerala. The economy of the State thrives on the remittances from the non-residents.

They go out and struggle in other states or in other countries to earn their livelihood and to take care of the families, back home. The Governments take their pound of flesh from these remittances in the form of taxes, while these amounts are spent in the State.

What these poor nonresidents get in return? Not a thing! Relentless

struggle of a few Keralites living in Mumbai made the Kerala House a reality. It took several decades for the Kerala Government to accept this demand. Now they suddenly developed love for nonresident Keralites and formed the Loka Kerala Sabha. They had spent millions on this account and it is not clear what the nonresidents are going to gain out of this?

Are they trying to recover the amounts they spend in that account by increasing the rents of Kerala House? According to me they should reduce the existing rates and encourage the Keralites to make this a frequent meeting place.

Prakash Padikkal

declaring their commitments to the people from the roof tops are found forging medical bills and buying eye glasses worth Rs.45,000/-, a subject never heard of anywhere in the world. Even then the government exhibited its love for the state by holding a first LOKA KERALA SABHA recently even though the expenditure incurred is yet to be disclosed.

With a lot of pleading and persuasions, the state government built Kerala House just to keep the Malayalees of Mumbai happy and charged them minimum rent when its halls are hired. Considering the number of employees and the outgoings thereon as salary, allowances, their undeclared expenditure while keeping the establishment running, it is natural that the income derived from the House



■ Kerala House is created primarily for the benefit of the Pravasi Malayalees by providing an affordable, safe and clean

environment for their use and stay in Mumbai. It should not be blatantly diverted from its primary purpose with the blind intention of profits and thus making it unaffordable for the Pravasi public. On a personal level and as a representative of the various Malayali Organisations represented by me, I condemn this unjustifiable fourfold increase of the tariff of Kerala House.

Adv. Padma Divakar IRS

would be inadequate. There are a few shops there waiting for customers and hardly anyone is buying anything from them. They are all there to keep the prestige of the State and its pride and heritage. It is natural that if not today but some other day the rents are to be revised. Considering the location of the House, it is certain that never it would recover the cost of running it.

We spoke to several people who count in our society and everyone is critical about the state's step and all of them are in an agitating mood. How long could we continue to run a losing venture? None seems to think of it. Everyone is talking about his right and privilege. Someone felt that the governmental action was an assault on the Mumbai Malayali's pride.

What should we do?

With most of Malayali leaders are angry with the state government for taking them granted or being insulted or being indifferent to their plight, it would be a Herculean task to convince them to take a drastic action. What Malayalees are generally accustomed to do is to throw their clenched fists into the sky and shout some slogans but that it would bring some positive results is wishful thinking. As a proud Malayali, I feel that I should not accept their charity nor I consider that I am a part owner of the Kerala House. I have not paid a single paisa or spent a single second for bringing that up. I would rather take some positive action to face this situation.

1. Since this hike in rent is to set off the increased expenses, we can approach the government to handover Kerala House to a Trust handled by a

wholly secular, non-political and dedicated Malayalees willing to spend their time and energy for a cause to aid and assist the poor Malayali organisations and individuals. A justifiable amount can be arrived at for this transfer and that amount should be given to the government, with the understanding that the government would not have any rights over the House.

2. If the government does not agree to this proposal or the price quoted is immensely high, form an umbrella association of all Samajams of this metropolis and accept contributions from them to buy a plot at a most convenient place and build our own HOUSE so that all the Samajams through their representatives can have their own say in the administration.

3. If both these suggestions are not feasible, approach the oldest and most respected Samajam (I have Bombay Keraleeya Samajam in my mind) devoid of all political, religious or casteist ideologies and negotiate for a re-development plan for their present structure and remodel it to suit all our and their needs. A memorandum of understanding to this effect is to be signed.

4. If the state government is not amenable to these ideas, boycott it



■ Dream Of Mumbai Malayalees, Kerala House at Vashi, as a cultural centre is shattered. The Government has

gone back from its earlier assurance now. The rent has been raised triple. Many social organisations have protested against the high charges.

After waiting for a number of years and a lot of struggle by Mumbai Malayalees, Kerala house was constructed at Vashi in the piece of land given by Maharashtra Government. This iconic building was dedicated to Mumbai Malayalees more than a decade ago by the then Kerala Chief minister V S Achuthandan. At the time of inauguration, it was assured that this will be the cultural centre for us, Malayalees. Everybody believed it.

But nothing happened even after changes in Government. Government kept Kerala House under the control of Tourism Department instead of keeping it under the cultural department despite our demand to retain it with the latter.

Though the rent charge for the auditorium having capacity of accommodating hardly 150 persons was exorbitant, it was very helpful to all of us to arrange small functions.

Now all of a sudden the government has revised the rent of the auditorium and there is a threefold increase. This is an arbitrary action of the government who boast always they stand for the welfare of common man.

After hearing the news, protests have been voiced from different corners. Their anguish and anger has been communicated through print and social media. A social media group Malayalee Chat members sat on a day long hunger strike/Dharna on Sunday, February 18 in front of Kerala House.

Many members of Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana (KKS), the apex Federation of more than sixty five secular organisations/samajams sent representations to Chief Minister Kerala individually demanding to restore the old rate. The newly formed Loka Kerala Sabha members from Mumbai plans to meet the Kerala Chief Minister in person shortly in this connection demanding roll back. KKS Mumbai has already decided to strengthen the agitation if the dispute is not settled by March 15.

Many Malayali organisations, irrespective of their caste, creed, religion or political affiliations condemned the insensitive action of the government and demanded to restore the old rent and if it is not accepted by the government immediately they plan to intensify the agitation collectively.

Sashikumar Nair
Gen Secretary ATMA Thane

completely even if this step is expensive. Gandhiji's tactics would be the most appropriate in this case instead of demonstrative methods.

5. Take all Malayali organisations into confidence and form a Malayali Trust out of them and collect money from Malayalees and their associations towards shares to gather the capital and

provide them with dividends.

It is hoped that the veteran leaders would consider better suggestions and open a new path for better future for the city's Malayali population.

Whenever the government does something unpalatable to the people, some of the literary and cultural awardees from the government resigned

to show their solidarity with the people. We are now afraid of the resignation by the representatives of Mumbai from their recently acquired seats of Loka Kerala Sabha that they obtained without any campaign and financial expenditure to show their solidarity with the Malayali associations of this metropolis. ■



■ കേരള ഹൗസ് ഹാൾ വാടക മുന്നിരട്ടി വർദ്ധിപ്പിച്ച സർക്കാർ നടപടിയിൽ മുംബൈ മലയാളികളുടെ അസ്വസ്ഥതയുടെ ത്വരിതപ്രതികരണം രേഖപ്പെടുത്താനായി ഫെബ്രുവരി 18-ന് കേരള ഹൗസിനു മുന്നിൽ നടക്കുന്ന

സുചനാപ്രതിഷേധത്തിന് കേരളീയ കേന്ദ്രസംഘടന സർവ്വാത്മനാ പിന്തുണ പ്രഖ്യാപിക്കുന്നു.

ഇപ്പോൾ ഒരു ലോക കേരളസഭ പ്രവാസികൾക്കുവേണ്ടി നിർമ്മിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. അതിൽ മുംബൈയെ പ്രതീനിധീകരിക്കുന്ന പലരും നിങ്ങളുടെ സംഘടനയിൽ അംഗങ്ങളാണ്. അവരോട് ഇതിന് പരിഹാരം കാണാൻ പറയുന്നതല്ലേ സമരത്തിനുമുമ്പ് ഇറങ്ങുന്നതിനുമുമ്പ് ചെയ്യേണ്ടത്?

കെ ഗോപാലൻ നായർ, പ്രസിഡണ്ട്, കേരളീയ കേന്ദ്രസംഘടന



■ മുംബൈ മലയാളിയുടെ ചിരകാലാഭിലാഷമായ കേരള ഹൗസ് ഉദ്ഘാടനാവസരത്തിൽ (2006 ഡിസംബർ) തടിച്ചുകൂടിയ ജനാവലിക്ക് ഒരു സപ്തം ഭാവിയിൽ ഇത് സാംസ്കാരിക പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കു ഉപയുക്തമാകുമെന്നായിരുന്നു.

അതനുസരിച്ചുള്ള വാഗ്ദാനങ്ങളും അന്നത്തെ പ്രസംഗങ്ങളിൽ പ്രതിഫലിച്ചിരുന്നു. കൂടുതലായ മുപ്പതിനായിരം രൂപയും കുറഞ്ഞ പതിനായിരം രൂപയും ശരാശരി സമാജങ്ങൾക്ക് അപ്രാപ്യമാണ്. അവതു ശതമാനം കുറച്ചേ തീരൂ.

വസ്തുവിലയിലും

വേതനനിലവാരത്തിലുമുണ്ടായ കുതിച്ചുചാട്ടം വിസ്മരിക്കാവുന്നതല്ലെങ്കിലും സാംസ്കാരികമേഖലയിലെ അദിതീയ ഘടകങ്ങളായ മലയാളി സമാജങ്ങൾ ഇന്നും പരിമിതമായ വരുമാനത്തിലൊതുങ്ങി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നവരാണ്.

ആധികാരികമായ ബുക്കിംഗ് സൗകര്യവും ഇവിടെ ലഭ്യമാക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

ഉപേന്ദ്ര മേനോൻ,

നാഷണൽ വൈസ് പ്രസിഡണ്ട്, ഓൾ ഇന്ത്യ മലയാളി അസോസിയേഷൻ

തീരുമാനം പുനഃപരിശോധിക്കണം



■ കേരള ഹൗസ് കോൺഫ്രൻസ് ഹാളിന്റെ വാടക മുന്നിരട്ടിയോളം കൂട്ടിയ കേരള സർക്കാർ നടപടി മുംബൈ കലാസാംസ്കാരിക പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങൾക്കും അതിലുപരി ജനപ്രിയ സർക്കാരിൽ വിശ്വാസം

അർപ്പിച്ച മുംബൈ പ്രവാസികൾക്കൊക്കെയുള്ള തിരിച്ചടിയായി ഭവിച്ചിരിക്കുകയാണ്. ഒന്നിക്കാം, സംവദിക്കാം, മുന്നേറാം എന്ന മുദ്രവാക്യവുമായി പ്രവാസികൾക്കായി ലോകകേരള സഭ രൂപീകരിച്ചതിനുശേഷം ഒരു മാസത്തിനുള്ളിൽ കേരള ഹൗസിന്റെ വാടകവർദ്ധനയിൽ ലോകകേരളസഭാംഗം എന്ന നിലയിൽ വളരെ ആശങ്ക ഉളവാക്കിയിരിക്കുന്നു. മുംബൈ പ്രവാസികൾക്കായുള്ള സാംസ്കാരിക കേന്ദ്രം എന്ന നിലയിൽ ആരാഭിച്ച കേരള ഹൗസിന്റെ ഉദ്ഘാടനച്ചിലവിന്റെ ബഹുഭൂരിപക്ഷവും മുംബൈയിലെ വ്യവസായികളും സംഘടനകളും സ്വരൂപിച്ച് ഏറെ ആഘോഷപൂർവ്വം നടത്തിയതാണെന്ന സത്യം സർക്കാർ ഈ അവസരത്തിൽ വിസ്മരിക്കരുത്. സ്വന്തം കെട്ടിടമില്ലാത്ത ബഹുഭൂരിപക്ഷം സാംസ്കാരിക സംഘടനകളുടെയും വിവിധ കലാസംസ്കാരിക പരിപാടികൾക്ക് ഏകാഗ്രയമായ സർക്കാർ സമുച്ചയമാണ് കേരള ഹൗസ്. വർദ്ധിച്ച നിരക്കുകൊണ്ട് കേരള ഹൗസിലെ ഹാൾ മുംബൈ മലയാളി സാംസ്കാരികവേദികൾക്ക് ഇനി അപ്രാപ്യമായ സാഹചര്യത്തിൽ മുംബൈയിലെ സാർവ്വത്രികമായ പ്രതിഷേധം ശക്തമായിരിക്കുകയാണ്. മുംബൈയിലെ മലയാളി കലാസാംസ്കാരിക രംഗത്തിന്റെ കേന്ദ്രമാകേണ്ട കേരള ഹൗസ് അത്തരം പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കായി സൗജന്യനിരക്കിൽ ഹാൾ നൽകേണ്ടത് കേരള സർക്കാരിന്റെ ഉത്തരവാദിത്തമാണെന്നിരിക്കെ, അതിനുകടകവിരുദ്ധമായി വാടക വർദ്ധിപ്പിച്ച് മുഖ്യ മന്ത്രിയും ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട അധികാരികളും പുനഃവിചിന്തനം ചെയ്യേണ്ടതും തീരുമാനം റദ്ദാക്കുവാൻ അടിയന്തിരമായ നടപടികൾ സ്വീകരിക്കേണ്ടതുമാണെന്നാണ് എന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം.

അഡ്വ. പ്രേമാമേനോൻ,

ലോക കേരളസഭാംഗം, സെക്രട്ടറി, എയ്.മ. മഹാരാഷ്ട്ര



RAAGALAYA & KIM CELEBRATIONS

The fourteenth Raagalaya Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed on senior and well known Carnatic vocalist and Music teacher Smt Alamelu Mani.



Hariharan presenting KIM Excellence Award to Kumaran Nair

Smt Alamelu Mani has been teaching Carnatic music for more than fifty years to many students in Mumbai, many of whom are now themselves teachers or professional musicians and are settled in Mumbai, and other cities and also spread all across the globe. She still performs and her music delights the listeners.

Smt Alamelu Mani is the mother of the popular music composer, and payback and ghazal singer A Hariharan. Hariharan accompanied his mother for the Award function along with his son Akshay and daughter in law Amrita and second son Karan. Smt Alamelu Mani received the Raagalaya Achievement Award at the hands of the well known and senior cardiologist Dr M G Pillai in the presence of eminent Mumbai



Smt Alamelu Mani with her family

Malayali personalities. P V Vijaykumar, President Raagalaya Aademy of Music and Arts presented floral bouquet to her.

During the Kerala In Mumbai Anniversary Celebrations that followed the Raagalaya Award Function, KIM Excellence Awards were bestowed on Mumbai Malayali Personalities who have achieved Excellence in their chosen field of Expertise. The eighth Excellence Awards were bestowed on M Kumaran Nair, Prakash Padikkal, P C John, Kalashree KNP Nambisan, Suma Mukundan and Premrajan Nambiar. They received the Awards at the hands of Hariharan in the presence of P V Viaykumar, Managing Editor, Kerala in Mumbai. All those who have contributed to the publishing of the magazine month after month for the last eight years were felicitated.



Performance by Hariharan

The celebrations started at 6.30 pm. A grand musical evening comprising of the evergreen melodious Malayalam film songs of lyricist and film Director the late P Bhaskaran was performed by Raagalaya Orchestra, while episodes from Bhaskaran's life and his musical journey was narrated beautifully by Ashish Abraham who compered the whole day's programme.

The events took place at Aishwarya Auditorium Marol Education Academy in Marol.



Section of audience



Hariharan presenting KIM Excellence Award to Prakash Padikkal



to P C John



to KNP Nambisan



to Suma Mukundan



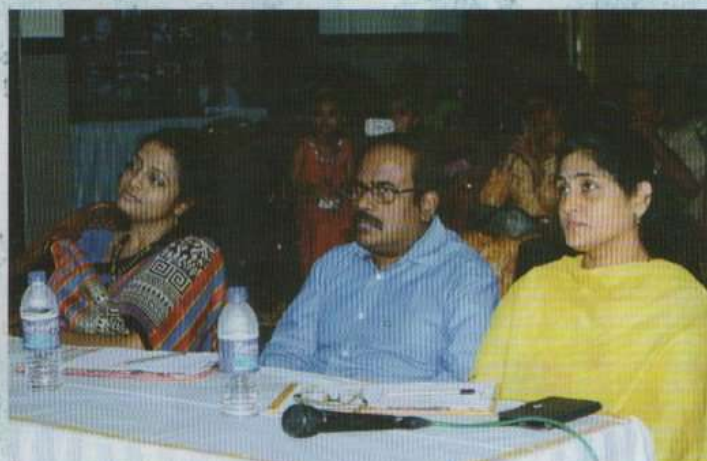
to Premrajan Nambiar

RAAGALAYA LIGHT MUSIC COMPETITION

The XIV Raagalaya Light Music Competition was held from 9.30 am at Marol Education, Marol on February 4. Around 70 contestants participated in the competitions that were held for both male and female and different age groups, ranging from five years to sixty and above. The participants were accompanied by Sreenu on keyboard and Kumar on tabla. The judges for the competition were Vichoo Iyer, Deepa Thyagarajan and Preethi Warriar.



Inauguration ceremony of Music Competition



Judges Preethi Warriar, Viswanathan and Deepa



Winners of RMC - Reha



Vaisakh



Maria



Shreerag



Akshaya



Godwin



Tanushree



Saurav Krishna



Jenya



Kedar



Aswathi and Jahnvi



Rahul



Anusha



Sunil



Geetha



Shibu



Nisha



Ajaikumar



Usha



Babu



Ramani



Ramachandran



Girija



Sunil



Section of audience



WINNERS OF RAAGALAYA MUSIC COMPETITION

Group	1st Male	2nd Male	1st Female	2nd Female
A	Vaisakh S Namboothiri	Sreerag C Nair	Reha Ratnakaran Nair	Maria Ann George
B	Godwin Baby	Saurav Krishna S Nair	Akshaya Ramachandran	Tanushree Mondal
C	Kedar Krishna Bhat	Rahul Menon	Jenya Jayakumar	Aswathi Mohanan P K Jahnvi Premkumar
D	Sunil Menon	Shibhu R S	Anusha M Iyer	Geetha Unnikrishnan
E	Ajaikumar T S	Babu Nair	Nisha Anoop	Usha Nair
F	N Ramachandran	Sunil Sebastian	Ramani Nair	Girija B. Panicker



Raagalaya team with singer Hariharan



Baburaj



Madhu Nambiar



Sebastian



Preeti Warriar



Deepa Tyagarajan



Ashish Abraham



Felicitation to V Balachandran



CKK Poduval



Dr Suresh Nair



Upendra Menon



Rajan V Nair



Prabhakaran Nair



Praveen



Host Vijayakumar



Ramachandran



AKK Nair



Sashikumar Nair



A N Shaji



Dr Aprain



C P Babu



Vijayakumar (BKS)



Satyanath



Lakshmi



K R Narayanan



Sreeprakash



Vidhya



Sudhakaran



Reshma



Sneha



Section of audience

THIS WORLD OF INTENSE GRIEF

Prof M R Chandrasekharan delves into one of the most celebrated books of short stories by T Padmanabhan and brings out the essence of style of writing. Padmanabhan is probably the only short story writer of Malayalam who does not venture into the field of novels.



■ When we go through the stories written by T Padmanabhan, we see a world of grief. In his world there is hardly anyone who is happy. The characters are different only because of their varying grief. In his compilation of short stories, 'Gouri', there is one story also titled 'Gouri' and there are twelve stories including this in the book. First story is 'Vanavasam' (Forest dwelling). It is a glance or a 'hole in the eye', if we borrow a phrase of Prof Mundasseri, into the running of schools in Kerala. In an introduction to Thakazhi's selected stories, Mundasseri used this phrase i.e., short story is a peep into the turbulent ocean of life. Due to heavy rain, a pedestrian sought refuge under the roof of a school. It was a building with walls made of mud blocks and a thatched roof. While standing there, he observed what was happening there. 'Inspection' is one of the best stories of S K Pottekat about schools. There he describes the misery of a male teacher and the ridiculousness of school administration as the subjects of that story. Padmanabhan observes the urgency of a teacher who comes to the class late but was in a hurry to leave it. He starts giving dictation but stops and tells the children, "You write it from the book. I am going and soon... In between the complete lesson..."

Lesson six. 'Vanavasam' but what Ramankutty 'heard' was 'Bana' instead of 'Vana.' The error in characters was not his only mistake. He has no books. He has only a slate and a notebook.

"What copybook is this? Haven't I told you that copy book should have lines in it?"

Teacher delivered his judgement. "You can go. Go home. You come to school when you have all the books."

When the boy was a little hesitant, Master was adamant.

"Hmm... Go."

Then the boy tightened his trousers that had no buttons, as if he was wearing a dhoti, and then walked into



the rain with his slate and notebook pressed on to his chest"

Penalty

There are a few anomalies to our schools. Some enrolled students do not continue in the school. Even if they continue in the school for some years, they remain illiterate. Some Education Committees have reported that some fifth standard students are not having the standard of second standard. Education is a big business in Kerala. In general, it is like forgetting to tie the mangal sutra because of the hurry in wedding rituals.

A teacher should have kindness for the child but he has no time for it. No one is saying that all teachers are like the one in *Vanavasam*. Yet it is a fact that the unkind teachers and the educational system hurt the children coming from homes which have no wherewithal to sustain themselves.

"I felt frightened when I thought what the child would have had for meal before leaving home or had he had any meal at all, when he reaches home,

would there be his parents at home, or what he would tell them etc."

This is the thinking of the observer. The teacher who sent the child home would have had these questions instead of the observer. The educational system disgraces the child who has no good clothes or sometimes even food but comes to the school thinking that he would at least have some education. They could have been forgiven if at least they teach the child something. That too does not happen. That is what Padmanabhan points out. The minister for education should read this story and weep.

Falsehood

The second story of the book is 'Makan' (Son). The only son studied well and rose to a high position. He got good employment. He got married to a house of high repute. But the highly placed son has no time to call on his parents. The problem is not that he is not sending 'draft' to them. Haven't his mother seen him

occasionally? Don't his wife and children know he has his mother and father alive? And also own house?

The father just returned after attending the wedding of the younger sister of his son's wife. He was forced to tell lies to his bed ridden wife that he would come to meet them soon.

"Tell me, will he come tomorrow?"

'.....'

"When will he come?"

'.....'

"Is it that he won't come hereafter?"

"Will come, after three four days.

Certainly he would come."

'.....'

"I know he would come. I know."

Her sound reminded the sound of fluttering feathers of a bird caught by hunters.

This was about the mother who was



asking if her son would come. When she had a positive answer, "her face showed an indescribable peace."

Please read this too.

"On the day of wedding, he had heard his son's father in law proudly telling someone, "He is very busy. Even for this marriage he just managed to be present. His company is sending him the day after tomorrow to Korea to sign certain contract."

Those went away

There is an English poem 'The Lodestar' in which a father consoles the mother saying that their dead son was still alive and the visitor who reached their home being waylaid was indeed their son. The runaway children and the mothers waiting for them! During the middle centuries, people in Europe used to go on ships to other countries in search of fortune, as our people leave for Gulf Countries. There are a few who made it and some who never returned. All of them have their mothers. In 'Amma' of Basheer who describes his mother who for years prepares supper and wait for her son during the night burning a chimney lamp. I also remember 'Keerhipparhanja Chakalass' (wholly torn blanket). Her son was employed in a high position in Delhi. When he was in college, he presented her a blanket. Mother is waiting for her son, with that torn blanket. Finally when the son came, she could not recognise him. She was telling him about her son in Delhi and about the torn blanket.

When his elder sister came near and asked him about his not coming to see mother, he said, "Mother doesn't even remember me."

She responded, "Do you remember her, Gopi?"

Lord Buddha said, "If you carry your mother on one shoulder and father on the other for hundred years, if you shower all pearls and diamonds over them, this debt could never be paid back."

Divine Blessing

The son in Madhavikutty's story has not come to repay the debt but to seek his share of property that he is entitled to get from mother and to return to Delhi after selling it at his village. Like in the story of Padmanabhan, parents in Madhavikutty's story also never aspire for money. They feel that if they could even see their son, it is divine blessing. Their children however do not realise

their emotions. During the roaring uprising of city life, they lost their source of tender emotions.

Padmanabhan is worried about this situation.

Structural trials

If we describe each story of Padmanabhan in this book, this write up would get prolonged. Each one of them is good in their way. Each of them touches the good hearted reader with their sheer uniqueness. While in *Makan*, the terribleness of the mother reaches its zenith and melts our heart. Vanavasam enlightens us about the shortcomings of our educational system. The distress of Ramankutty does not leave us easily. As per western critics, short story is on a lower pedestal in comparison with other branches of literature. It is not used as an instrument to discuss the philosophical and moral problems of the society, they feel. They believe that all discussions on short story are confined to the four walls of its structure. Short story does not get their due consideration in western literature and reviews. Some critics there believe that short stories are only a stepping stone to novels. In Malayalam, it is however different. Here the tradition of social criticism, started by novels of Chandu Menon and C V Raman Pillai, was carried on subsequently by short stories. In 1930s, the short stories carried out the job of novels. S K Pottekat, P C Kuttikrishnan and Ponkunnam Varkey wrote longer short stories than some novels of others. The late entrants contributed their might to short stories. They were more concerned about mental issues than social problems like revolution. This led to their experiments with the structural styles of short story.

Contradictions of experience

Padmanabhan does not belong to that group supporting structural experiment as the first choice. He is of the view that the essence of the story is to touch the heart. He never held the view that the human issues should be kept away. You will see the two ends of human issues in the two stories cited above. Food is not the only source of one's life. Mothers cannot live without seeing their son. However the son can live happily without seeing mother. This contradiction you can experience in the story 'Makan.' It may not have relevance to revolution but it certainly

has a humane aspect. The old belief was that the humane issues do not have place for mental miseries. Today such belief has expired. When son shows a little human concern for mother, it rises to a higher level values. The concept of stability of society also enhances the level of the above thought. *Vanavasam* shows not only the short comings of education methods but also the teacher's apathy towards the child. These two issues have a link in the story. Who is Ramankutty who walks away after fastening his buttonless trousers like a dhoti, holding to his torn notebook and slate to his chest, into the rain without an umbrella? He could be the son of poor parents or an orphan, yet as an Indian he ought to have some rights as a citizen. He has the right to have protection as a child. Did we provide it? This great nation should have provided it. Why it shunned its responsibility? *Vanavasam* sends a strong social criticism through its content.

Appreciation

As a story teller Padmanabhan does not show any acrobat. The new approach is that mere story telling is not enough but the reader should indeed experience it. Can this appreciation be transferred as if milking a not so friendly cow tied in a very narrow cowshed? If the story is good, the reader would enjoy it. If the story is not good, we cannot enforce the enjoyment on readers. What is appreciable in a story? Is the author capable of pointing out the essence of the story? If he can, the reader would shake his head in appreciation. A talented author would show the extraordinary sensitivity behind the ordinary issues. The secret of success of Padmanabhan lies in his ability to show the special points encased in ordinary things. It can be explained on the basis of 'Makan.' The rise in status of the son and the power of his relations etc are the ordinary things visible to the reader but the pain in mother will not be visible. Yet Padmanabhan could see that and could make the reader feel it. Similarly he could bring the grief of the student Ramankutty in *Vanavasam*.

What is significant is that Padmanabhan could prevent an ordinary general story slipping to mere entertainment but could raise it to the core of life.

It is said that Padmanabhan would fill himself in all his stories. Out of the 12 stories, in 7 he is involved. We may say that the pedestrian who took refuge

on the veranda of the school and observed the management of education was Padmanabhan himself. The story needed a witness for the events happening there and so he became that witness. The 'I' in 'Ente Sony Colour TVyum aetho oramma kontuvanna plastic kalhippattangalum' (My Sony Color TV and plastic toys brought by one mother) is also Padmanabhan.

"Though I went near and introduced myself, he did not look at my face."

"I thought if he heard my name, he would give a special consideration."

These two quotes are the evidences of Padmanabhan assimilated himself into the character.

Mother

The official in 'Kathunna Oru Rathachakram', 'I' in 'Raviyute Kalyanam', the house owner of 'Shrutibhangam', 'I' in 'Ramettan'; all of them are Padmanabhan. In 'Kathunna Oru Rathachakram', the official treats the woman who grieves when she lost her cow, as if she is his mother. The events of mother maintaining the cow and by selling her milk, sustain the lives of all in her home, are repeatedly

reminded. In 'Ramettan' also, cow finds a place whenever mother is mentioned. "For a living, mother sold the cow's milk but she never sold the cow." When the officer offered to get the woman another cow, she cried. She refused to receive the cow, saying that her mother would never accept another cow in place of her own cow which stopped giving milk on becoming aged. She would never sell it. "You wouldn't sell your kids, similar to that," mother said. She would give it a share of whatever she has.

The author writes at one place, "When mother walks around, truth always spread its light like a big chariot wheel." He did not paint the picture of mother in his words. Instead, he described her actions. A clear and bright image of mother emerges from it. He drew a picture of mother, a milk woman.

"...Then a picture comes in the mind of a mother coming with a bottle of milk. Lean, crumpled, body slightly bent forward, a decoloured old upper cloth on her shoulders, a gratifying and peaceful face she comes without disturbing even a grass on her way."

So what if the author did not paint his own mother's picture? What is given above is the painting of all mothers.

Even if the son is a highly placed official, he is her son. That is the fact that 'Kathunna Oru Rathachakram' indicates.

In 'Shrutibhangam', a brother had to see the dismantled planks of a rice-chest on which his mother used to sleep earlier. His

sister demanded that rice chest as part of her share when she moved away, feeling that looking after their mother was a burden. He was shocked to see those planks covered in dust in a car shed. He went to her place to protest against her action of selling a jack tree in their old house to wood cutters. Earlier she had given up her right over that tree. "You can get that jack tree cut only after removing my dead body from there..." he told her.

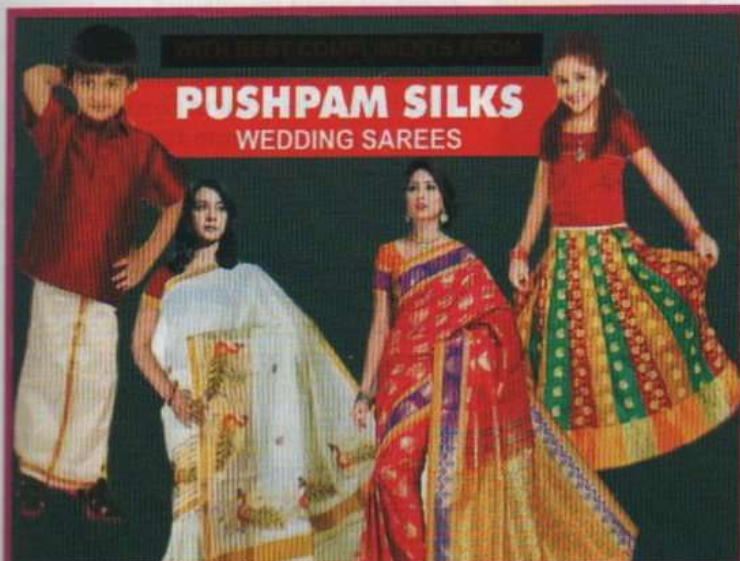
"That big tree was filling my mind since childhood. Full of sweet fruits! The crowing of crows and chirping of sparrows! Children under the shadows of the tree... Over all the noises, mother's loving voice!"

The author and the character

The stories are encompassed with mother. She is Padmanabhan's mother herself. Son is also there under her shadow. The story of that son and mother is heart rendering in 'Ramettan.' Ramettan is an extraordinary person. His deeds are unknown. Like the tip of the iceberg, we know only a slice of it. Yet, his arrival from Madras, nonstop talking, the shirt pieces and planting of mango tree etc fill the story. That tree in the burial ground is now full of fruits. 'I,' the high officer at a distant place, go there to see that tree! It is tough to notice where Padmanabhan disappears and the character appears. In 'Dasan' and 'Raviyute Kalyanam' also, similar situations exist. It would be unnecessary to describe them too.

Explosive Power

Which are the best stories of 'Gouri'? According to me, they are 'Makan', 'Vimalayute Katha', 'Kathunna Oru Rathachakram', 'Ramettan' and 'Gouri.' I already referred to 'Makan.' 'Vimalayute Katha' becomes exemplary because it shocks the reader when he realises that the life of Vimala and her son become a cross at the end though the story started on a lazy note. She becomes a widow at a young age, goes to office after entrusting the care of her son to a female caretaker, and when she returns the son is complaining "I will not go to teacher's house, she beats me, and she scares me by staring at me." The teacher complains that her son is naughty and she cannot look after him. "He is a child, he will be alright soon," she consoles. "He will not. He is already five year old," teacher responds. "Mother, you don't go anywhere. You remain with me. I won't go to teacher's house," son's resolve. He



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

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

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

കാമരാജ് ദോത്തി, മുണ്ടുകൾ, റെഡിമെയ്ഡ് ഷർട്ടുകൾ
"ഓട്ടിച്ചോ കെട്ടിക്കൊ വെൽക്രോ ദോത്തി പോക്കറ്റ് ഉൾപ്പെടെ"
ഫാക്ടറി വിലയിൽ ലഭിക്കുന്നതാണ്

No. 2, Matunga Mansion, Opp. Post Office, Bhandarkar Road,
Matunga (C.R), Mumbai - 400 019.
Tel: 2418 1025, 2410 5293, Mob: 98920 67581

embraces her and cries. She feels helpless as she goes to work as a guide to sustain themselves.

Vimala is at the nadir of helplessness. Is it an isolated case? No, it is a model only. Her problem is the same as that of similar women. 'Vimalayute Katha' is quite explosive.

Gouri

Gouri is a much celebrated story. Some critics even swore that Padmanabhan could not write another story better than this. Some even proclaimed that it was a love story written by him. Nevertheless, it is difficult for me to agree that it is the best story of this book. According to me, its place is after 'Kathunna Oru Rathachakram', 'Makan,' and 'Ramettan'. Even 'Vimalayute Katha' also could be placed before it. Gouri has some structural defects. It is not a

single story but a union of three stories. One, the story of Gouri the wife, her husband who does not agree to a divorce and their daughter; two, story of Gouri's unnamed friend and his teenage love and three, the story of limitless 'friendship' of Gouri the high level bureaucrat and her friend. One fundamental principle of short story is that it should have only one effect.

The implication of single effect is that a short story cannot have several diversions. If a traveller finds three paths leading to different destinations, he would be confused. In the case of Gouri, the reader would have that confusion. Which is the most important matter in this case? Is it the relationship between Gouri and her friend? Is it the fulfilment of their love implied? Or, liberation of Gouri from her vengeful husband? The teenaged romance itself is an independent story. It may have sub

plots but the main point should not be forgotten. Gouri does not have that certainty.

The beginning of Gouri is fantastic. Two career oriented personalities. Lack of a divorce decree does not make Gouri bonded. The only limitation she suffers is that she cannot have access into the hostel where her daughter is boarded. Gouri and her friend have a magnificent time in various tourist centres of India and Nepal. There is a management seminar in Kathmandu under Gouri's supervision. Then they are on a leave of one week. They have remarkable time in a hotel in the middle of an isolated island in the valley of Annapoorna. They have been to a few holiday resorts like Gopalpur, Mahabaleshwar, Pachmari, Darjeeling, Kanyakumari and so on. Gopalpur is Gouri's favourite place. It is this place where the events are supposed to take place. To witness the sunrise of Gopalpur, Gouri and friend leave their hotel before the break of dawn. When the story starts, we feel they are a couple. Realistically are they not a couple? Only on the presence of a mangalsutra or other traditional rituals determine the status of matrimony?

Some relevant parts of the story of Gouri are good enough to be included in a tourist guide. There is burning grief within; over it there is a luxury life. Their love is like that of Dushyanta. Dushyanta had a harem full of his wives and yet he fell for Sakuntala. Then there is a Dushyanta suffering from separation and later another Dushyanta detached from worldly affairs. Padmanabhan however does not indicate such a detachment. From the standard of their living, it could be concluded that their grief was only skin deep. It means that the characters are unreliable.

Comparison

When we read 'Gouri', two other stories come to mind. They are 'Vanaprastham' of MT and 'Deshatanapakshikal' of Valsala. All three stories show uncanny similarities in certain details. In the story by Valsala, the main characters are similar to Gouri and friend. Gouri shows similarity in the moulds of characters and the visit to temple. It is not to be construed that they copied from the other. They do not need to do it. They are celebrated and talented in their own way. I only meant that the learners of literature should take special care. Comparison in literature is not be discarded. ■



KERALA BUDGET REDDISH WITH A WHITE TINGE



V. Balachandran

Faced with a revenue deficit of Rs 12,860 crores and a mounting public debt of Rs. 2,40,897 crores and an interest thereon payable at Rs. 15,000 crores, Dr Thomas has said: "If there is no fiscal discipline, it may not be possible to raise funds for development through the Kerala Institutional Investment Fund Board (KIIFB). If the revenue doesn't rise, the expenditure has to be reduced. Our walking on a thread-thin bridge ('Noolpaalam') continues."

Plans involving an outlay of Rs 54,000 crores are to be implemented by the KIIFB. Unfortunately, as critics have pointed out, the track record of KIIFB has not been satisfactory so far. At present, the KIIFB has in its kitty only Rs. 4012 crores. Though the amount approved for various projects is Rs. 18,938 crores, it has spent only Rs. 331 crores. With Rs. 4270 crores in the budget provided for the next four months, the KIIFB is expected to raise the money for its projects from the market through chit funds, bonds, and guarantees (by the Government) all these are repayable from the budget receipts. The FM has thus placed all the (development) eggs in the KIIFB basket which is loose. Even an incurable optimist may not share the FM's confidence!

On the revenue side, the FM's net is likely to catch only small fish. He relies heavily on land deals and liquor sales and expects to raise only Rs. 970

crores. His expectations are high from the GST. The uncertainties from this source are too obvious to need any elaboration; the tax-payers need to master the intricacies on the one side and the administrative machinery needs to run smoothly on the other side. This would require some time.

An interesting source of revenue (about Rs. 100 crores) is from those who have registered their luxury cars with the Government of Puducherry; in case they pay what is due to the Kerala Government for registration, no cases (apprehended) against them will be filed. The negative impact of this step is that the fear of law and faith of the people in the legal system will be undermined.

The FM has retained all the welfare schemes and introduced a few more. A welcome provision of Rs. 2000 crores has been made for the rehabilitation of the people in the coastal areas affected by the cyclonic storm Ockhi. Adequate provisions have been made for the protection of women, unmarried mothers, trans-genders, disabled persons, and for healthcare, construction of bridges etc. The need to take care of immigrants from Bihar, West Bengal etc. is stressed. Good enough, but is the State labour fully employed?

A matter of some amusement is that the FM has exhorted officials to follow some austerity measures they should cut down travel, use mobile phones, use taxis instead of cars etc. Of late, there have been reports of Ministers (including the FM himself) indulging in extravagant expenditure on personal needs. The social media are merry over these juicy bits of news.

The ignoring of the primary and

secondary sectors, agriculture and industry, which are the basic means of ensuring employment and income, besides tourism, is striking. In agriculture, there is an urgent need to reverse the trend of cultivable land being used to erect residential buildings. Agricultural labour is scarce and, if available, its wages are too high to make cultivation economically viable. Coconut tree-climbers, at one time the pride of Kerala for their squirrel-like movement, are nowhere on the scene so much so that oil mills are starved of copra the price of coconut oil is sky high. Is there is no scope for improving tourist facilities?

Investment in industry, either by entrepreneurs from outside or by Keralites themselves, has dried up. Unless the labour is disciplined and prevented from going on strike for flimsy reasons, the present unfortunate situation is likely to continue indefinitely with gains to none. To end this impasse, efforts should be made to ensure that politics does not overshadow economics. There are reports of political killings, which not only bring a bad name to the State but deter fresh investments by outsiders.

Kerala tops the list with maximum literacy among the States. But talented Keralites seek their livelihood outside the State. The estimated value of remittances by them is about one lakh crores every year about half the budget expenditure. Where does all this money go?

Taiwan is a country which is more or less the size of Kerala in respect of area and population. It has succeeded in evolving a new model of development. Why not make a study of that model for use in Kerala with suitable adjustments?

THE CROW STORY



“കാക: കൂപ്പു പിക്: കൂപ്പു, പിക് കാകയോ!
വസന്തകാലേ സാപ്രാപ്യേ കാക: കാക: പിക്: പിക്!!!”



K R Narayanan

■ (The crow and the cuckoo are black in color; but as the spring sets in, the crow remains a crow and cuckoo, the cuckoo). This is an old proverb in Sanskrit, which says

that external appearances are misleading and the true picture comes out only at the appropriate time. Whatever the proverb may mean, our Crow or the Indian Raven has been with us from time immemorial and has been the hero in many of our folklores and mythological stories.

It is said that crows have been associated with humanity ever since the dawn of history. According to ornithologists, crows have been with us ever since the middle Miocene era. They are mentioned in most of the epics and legends of the world.

They are said to be clever, and a fable says that a crow had put stones into a narrow necked pitcher with very little water, thus raising the water level to enable it to drink water from it. The stories of their innocence, as well, have been taught to us from the nursery classes onwards, through the fable of the fox and the crow. As far as India is concerned, the crows did have a place in mythology and the epics. The Ramayana says that Indra's son, Jayanta, took the form of a crow and pecked at the breast of Sita Devi and the angry Sriram blinded him with a “Darbha” grass. To the God of Saturn (Shani Deva), the crow was the vehicle.

A poet in Kerala, used the crow for his nursery rhyme and asked “Kaakke

Kaakke Koodevide”. (O crow, where is your nest?). Our Head Master and a great Malayalam poet Vylloppilly Sreedhara Menon described the crow as “*Kooriruttinte Kidaatthi*” (Baby of pitch darkness). The crows have been with us and have attracted us in so many ways in the course of our history and civilization.

Hindus consider crows as the souls of their ancestors and hence feed them on the latter's death anniversaries (*Sraaddh*). However, the Malayalam writer and Gnanpeeth Award winner, M T Vasudevan Nair lamented in one of his autobiographical stories: “*I cannot imagine my mother as a dirty crow*”.

Science of the Crow

According to ornithologists, all the crows of the world belong to the vertebrate avian family called *Corvidae* and is very widely distributed in the world. The genus, *Corvus*, includes medium to large-sized birds, and contains the crows, ravens, rooks and jackdaws. The distinction between “crows” and “ravens” is not very clear; but, generally, the crows are smaller in size. Recent research has proved that some crow species are capable of not only using, but also constructing tools.

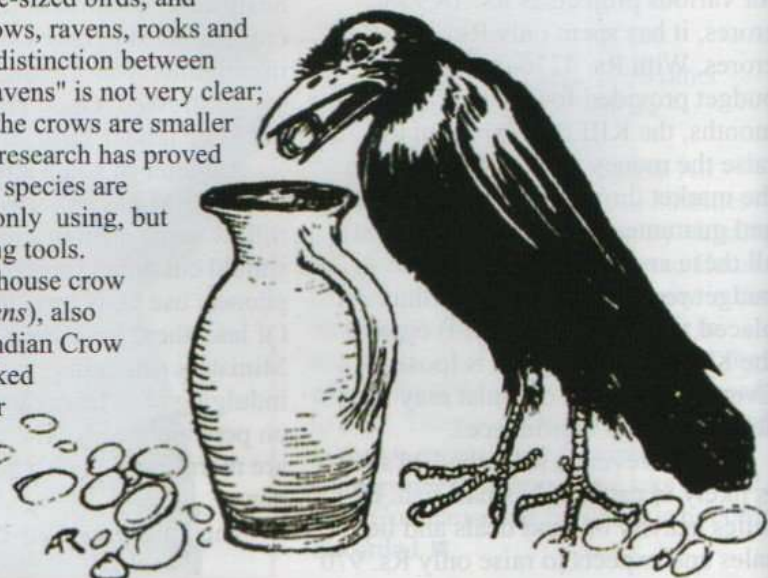
The Indian house crow (*Corvus splendens*), also known as the Indian Crow or the grey necked crow, Ceylon or Colombo crow is a common bird of the crow family and is of

Asian origin. But, now, they are found in many parts of the world, where they arrived assisted by the ships and other sea going vessels. However, there are regional variations in the thickness of the bill and the depth of color of the plumage of the Indian crows.

A Murder

A group of crows is called a “*Murder*.” There are several different explanations for the origin of this term, mostly based on old folk tales and superstitions. The most common is the folklore that crows will gather and decide the capital punishment to another crow for some specific fault or reason.

Many view the appearance of crows as an omen of death because ravens and crows are scavengers and are generally associated with dead bodies, battlefields and cemeteries, and they're thought to circle in large numbers above sites where animals or people are expected to



die soon.

However, some are of the view that the term "murder of crows" mostly reflects a time when groupings of many animals had colorful and poetic names. Other examples of the "group" names include: *an ostentation of peacocks*, *a parliament of owls*, *a knot of frogs*, and *a skulk of foxes*.

The Level of Intelligence

Crows are now considered to be among the most intelligent animals of the world, with an encephalization quotient (EQ) equal to that of many higher primates, except human beings.

Countless incidents are recorded of corvids at play. The behaviorologists and ornithologists consider the "playing habits" of the crows as an essential feature of intelligence. Their intelligence has brought about some peculiar behavioral changes in their modes of living, especially their communal roosting habits. Normally, the crows gather in large communal roosts numbering thousands of individuals during non-breeding months. Generally, these gatherings tend to happen near large food sources such as garbage/wastage dumps.

Crows and other members of the genus make a wide variety of noises or calls or vocalizations. Also, they have



R K Laxman

been observed to respond to the calls of other species. Crows' vocalizations are complex and poorly understood. These vocalizations vary among different species, and even within the species, they are said to vary according to the regions. In many species, the pattern and number of the numerous vocalizations have been observed to change, in response to events in the surroundings.

Some types of cawing of these birds are considered ominous among our older generations. [*Kaakka virunnu vilichu* (crow has indicated the arrival of a guest) is a very common example of this].

As a group, the crows exhibit a great level of intelligence. Some literature of Natural History speaks of their ability to count to five (or four in some versions). Wild hooded crows in Israel are said to have learned to use bread crumbs for bait-fishing. They have even been found to engage in activities such as sports, tool use, and the ability to hide / store food across seasons. Crows have demonstrated the ability to distinguish

individual humans by recognizing their facial features.

Artists' Favorite

Somehow or other, the crows are a favorite for many artists, painters and cartoonists in different parts of the world. The reputed Indian cartoonist R K Laxman was so fond of watching the crows in its different moods that he made innumerable sketches of these birds and held an exhibition of his crow pictures much before his demise.

Great Scavengers

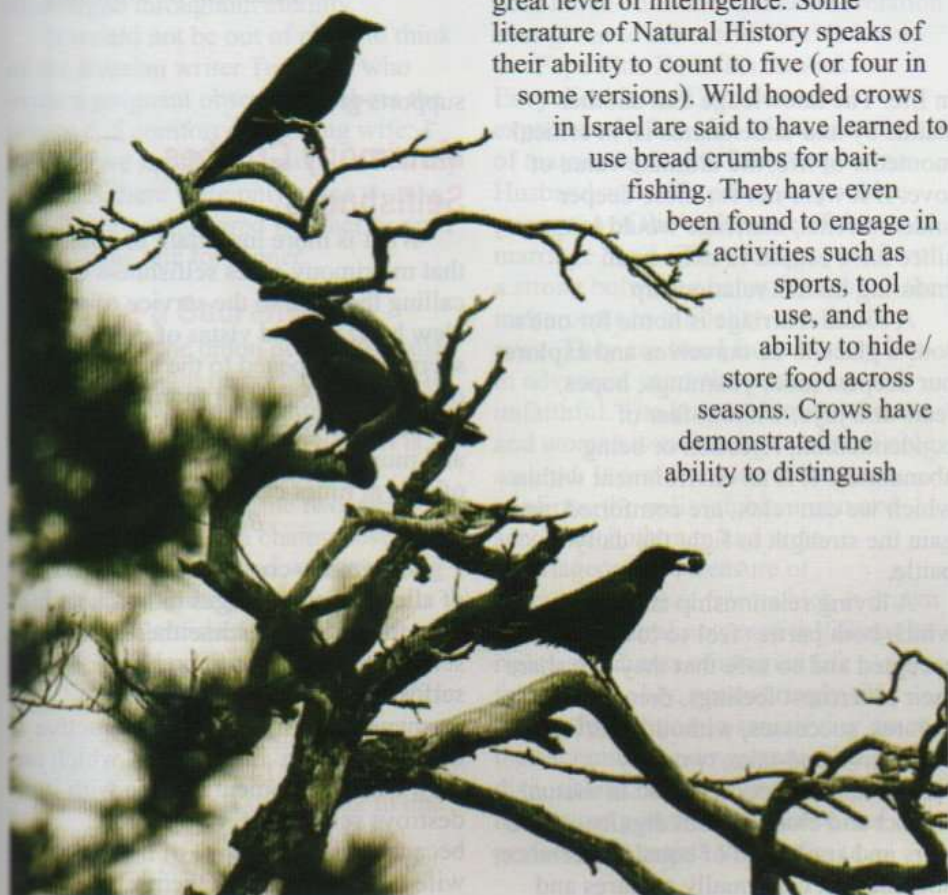
Crows perform a useful function in keeping our environment free from rotting carcasses, opine most of the environmental scientists. Dr Richard Inger, a researcher attached to the Environment and Sustainability Institute at Penryn Campus, opines: "If you consider all the wildlife that lives in the habitats in our towns and countryside, it might seem odd that we rarely see dead animals, apart from roadkill. This is because other animals act as scavengers and eat them."

The crows and other scavengers, which are often perceived as pests and generally fairly unloved species, are performing a very valuable service. Without these scavengers dead animals would be scattered around our environment rotting and causing a hygiene hazard, says he. This does not happen because other animals act as scavengers and eat them.

Scavenging is both a carnivorous and herbivorous feeding behavior, in which the scavenger feeds on dead animals and plant material present in its habitat. Scavengers play an important role in the ecosystem by consuming the dead animal and plant material. Scavengers may also provide unique benefits to human societies by consuming organic waste as well. The vultures, eagles and crows are considered to be the most effective scavenging birds.

The researchers observed and filmed 17 vertebrate species eating rat carcasses. Seven species including the Carrion Crow, the Common Buzzard, European Magpie, Herring Gull, Fox and Badger were recorded eating the carcasses, with 98 per cent of the activity carried out by the Crows.

In a country like India, where waste management has become an acute problem (especially in urban areas), the role of a biological scavenger like the crow cannot be overestimated. ■





MARRIAGE THE SWEET CULMINATION OF HUMAN LOVE

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion Putto use,
In my old grief's, and with my Childhood's faith;
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears of all my life; and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth B. Browning



Prof Dr John Mathews Vazhappilly

■ Tennyson believed that marriages are made in heaven. Cervantes said that marriage is a noose. Sidney Smith observed that "marriage resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them". Ibsen wrote that "marriage is something you've got to give your whole mind to." Clearly the most difficult, demanding, maddening, rewarding and blissful of all human relationships. . is the wonderful, unpredictable state of matrimony.

There is nothing more lovely in life than the union of two people whose love for one another has grown through the years, from the tiny seed of infatuation, into a mighty, magnificent matrimonial tree. To know that one is loved and to love; these are the greatest satisfactions

in life. The knowledge that another stands by and understands is, in critical moments of life, the ultimate value of love. If it were not for these deeper undercurrents, marriage would long since have ceased to exist as an enduring human relationship

A sound marriage is home for one's soul—a place to be ourselves and explore our deepest inner yearnings, hopes, fears and joys, without fear of condemnation, rejection or being abandoned. It is an environment within which we can relax, are comforted, and gain the strength to fight the daily battle.

A loving relationship is one in which both parties feel so loved, so accepted and so safe that they can share their innermost feelings, dreams, failures, successes, without reservation. It is a give-and-take, two-way reciprocal interaction rooted in mutual respect and cloaked with dignity, where tears and smiles are of equal importance and one that continually nurtures and

supports growth.

Matrimony Crushes Selfishness

What is more important to note is that matrimony cures selfishness by calling the flesh to the service of others. New horizons and vistas of devotion and sacrifice are opened to the eyes of flesh; others become more important, than self; the ego becomes less circumscribed and more expansive. It reaches out to others, at times even forgetting self.

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen

Matrimony crushes selfishness, first of all, because it merges individuals into corporate life in which neither lives for self but for the other; it crushes selfishness also because the very permanence of marriage is destructive of those fleeting infatuations, which are born with the moment and die with it; it destroys selfishness, furthermore, because the mutual love of husband and wife takes them out of themselves into

the incarnation of their mutual love, their other selves, their children; and finally it narrows selfishness because the rearing of children demands sacrifice, without which, like unwatered flowers, they wilt and die.

Marriage is not a union merely between two creatures - it is a union between two spirits; and the intention of that bond is to perfect the nature of both, by supplementing their deficiencies with the force of contrast, giving to each sex those excellences in which it is naturally deficient; to the one, strength of character and firmness of moral will; to the other, sympathy, meekness and tenderness. There are two rocks, in this world of ours, on which the soul must either anchor or be wrecked the one is God, and the other is the sex opposite. In this context I am reminded of beautiful words of Goethe:

Marriage is the beginning and end of all culture. It civilizes the savage and gives the most cultured the best opportunity of displaying their delicacy. It must be indissoluble, for it brings so much happiness that any exceptional unhappiness it may bring with it are, when weighed in the scales against the happiness, of no account. The scale of joy and sorrow in mortal affairs is so high that the sum which two married people owe one another is incalculable. It is an infinite debt, which can only be discharged throughout eternity.

It would not be out of place to think of the Russian writer Turgenev who made a poignant observation about the solace and comfort of a loving wife: I would give up all my genius, and all my books, if there were only some woman, somewhere, who cared whether or not I came home late for dinner.

Marriage a Sacrament

Marriage the union of two divinities that a third might be born on earth. It is the union of two souls in a strong love for the abolishment of separateness. It is that higher unity which fuses the separate unities within the two spirits. It is the golden ring in a chain whose beginning is a glance, and whose ending is Eternity. It is the pure rain that falls from an unblemished sky to fructify and bless the fields of divine Nature.

Khalil Gibran

The Matrimonial bond is sacramental in nature. The little tasks of every day, the words they speak to one another, the joys they share and the sorrows they endure, the strength they

give and the strength they borrow, their hours and days and years together, shine with the brilliance of a sacrament, and are colored with its glory. And the house that shelters them and their family, whether it be a mansion or a cottage, a tenement or a hut, is like the tabernacle on the altar that protects and preserves the divine presence dwelling within it.

Marriage is a sacrament in the sense that it is a material, carnal channel towards the spiritual and the divine.

Husband and wife come to see that human love is a spark from the great flame of eternity; that the happiness that comes from the unity of two in one flesh is a prelude to that greater communion of two in one spirit. In this way, marriage becomes a tuning fork to the song of the angels, or a river that runs to the sea.

The married couple sees that there is an answer to the elusive mystery of love, and that somewhere there is a reconciliation of the quest and the goal, and that is in final union with God, where the chase and capture, the romance and the marriage, fuse into one. For since God is boundless eternal Love, it will take an ecstatic eternal chase to sound its depths. At one and the same eternal moment, there is a limitless receptivity and boundless gift. Thus does Eros climb to agape, and both move on to that greatest revelation ever given to the world: God is Love.

Pope Pius XI in his famous Encyclical letter *Casti Connubii*, expresses the benefits of the sacrament of matrimony in the following terms: Husband and wife possess a positive guarantee of the endurance of the marriage bond. They are provided with a strong bulwark of chastity against the incitements to infidelity, should they arise. They are freed from anxiety lest in advanced years the partners prove unfaithful. The human dignity of man and woman is maintained. Mutual aid is assured. It perfects natural love, confirms the indissoluble union and sanctifies both man and wife. Marriage opens a treasure of sacramental grace from which is drawn the supernatural power of fulfilling the rights and duties of married life faithfully, holily, perseveringly till death. In addition to sanctifying grace, the sacrament bestows particular gifts, dispositions, seeds of grace, by which the natural powers are elevated and perfected. It assists the parties in

understanding and knowing intimately, in adhering to firmly, in willing effectively, and in successfully putting into practice those things which appertain to the married state, its aims and duties.

Marriage a Spiritual Partnership

Love is a moment and a lifetime. It is looking at him across a room and feeling that if I don't spend the rest of my life with him, I'll have missed the boat. Love is working together, laughing together, growing together. It is respect for each other and the people each cares about, however difficult it is sometimes to like his relatives or his friends. Love is wanting to shout from the rooftops the successes, little and big, of one another. Love is wanting to wipe away the tears when failure comes. Love is liking the feel of each other, it is wanting to have children together because they are the exclamation point of love. Love is laughter, especially in the middle of a quarrel.

Anon

The groom was handsome. The bride was radiant. A warm, alpine day completed the picture. Snow-covered mountains dominated the distance. Pine trees surrounded the guests. When the ceremony was over, the band played and everyone ate and danced. Then a very special thing happened. The new husband looked into the eyes of his new wife. "I trust you," he said, "because I know that you love God more than you love me."

That is how spiritual partnership works. Spiritual growth in one partner creates the opportunity for spiritual growth in the other. Then the other has to decide whether to grow or not. Each spiritual partner sees himself as a soul first, and a personality second. Each is committed to growing spiritually. Until you have the courage to enter into relationships of substance and depth, you cannot develop spiritually.

The English writer Zuckav in his book *Soul Stories* speaks about the spiritual partnership of modern couples. They give less importance to formal relationships and social expectations. These couples are passionately concerned with their spiritual growth. He says that, the new female and the new male do what farmers, millers and bakers do. They take their grain to the mill, grind it into flour, and bake the



Anisha Nair
Dombivli



Dreams.....

Dreams are to be seen with open eyes
and are to be fulfilled if you are wise
All dream a lot in a lifetime
few take the courage to accomplish at a age prime
Dreams are beginning
which take you towards new innings
Dreams are like an ocean
where if you try can grab a portion
Dreams make our identity
if we try to make it a reality
Dreams are not to be forgotten,
nor have to be in your mind forever to be rotten
They have to be created
with your mind and soul together mated
Once you achieve what you wanted
finding peace in your last days without being haunted
Dreams are for those who keep the will
tearing apart all hurdles to achieve and fulfill

flour into bread. The grain is their fear
their anger, shame, jealousy and sorrow.
The mill is their spiritual partnership.
The bread is the harmony, co-operation,
sharing and reverence for Life that they
create together.

I feel that many old couples emit a
brighter radiance of spiritual
partnership than young couples. The
vicissitudes of life, the trials and
tribulations of a long life have induced
in them a deep serenity and the spirit of
genuine love. This is the secret behind
the glow on their faces, not cosmetics.
One can find such couples everywhere
in Bombay at the Marine drive, at Juhu
Beach, in small gardens in front of
housing societies, on the porches of old
folks homes: an old man with snow-
white hair, a little hard of hearing,
reading the newspaper through a
magnifying glass; an old woman in a
shapeless dress, her knuckles gnarled
by arthritis, wearing glass to ease her

aching arches. They are holding hands,
and in a little while they will totter off
to take a nap, and then she will cook
supper, not a very good supper, they
will watch television each knowing
exactly what the other is thinking, until
it is time for bed. They may even have a
good, soul-stirring argument, just to
prove that they still really care. And
through the night they will snore
unabashedly, each resting content
because the other is there. They are in
love, they have always been in love,
although sometimes they would have
denied it. And because they have been
in love they have survived everything
that life could throw at them, even their
own failures.

The Story of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Sophia Hawthorne

One of the most strikingly beautiful

stories of a love between a man and his
wife that grew stronger and greater with
the years, in spite of poverty and
adversity, is that of Nathaniel and
Sophia Hawthorne. On the first
anniversary of their marriage, Nathaniel
wrote these touching words to his wife:
"Dearest Love, we have never been so
happy as now. This birthday of our
married life is like a cape, which we
have now doubled and find a more
infinite ocean of love stretching out
before us."

Twenty-two years later, shortly
before his death, Nathaniel again wrote
of his love - love that had grown
stronger from continuous association,
love that he called "that enchanting
mystery." Writing then, he left the world
this single touching testament:
"Happiness has no succession of events
because it is part of eternity. And we
have been living in eternity since our
marriage." ■



SPECTACULAR NATYANJALI FESTIVAL OF DANCE



**Lakshmi
Venkatachalam**

■ Natyanjali Festival organised by Shanmukhapriya, the cultural and charitable Wing of Sri Subramania Samaj, Cheddanagar, Chembur took place from February 1 to

February 13, concluding on Mahashivaratri. The 13 day feast of various dance classical styles gave an auspicious platform to many institutions whose teachers and students performed in front of Lord Nataraja within the temple complex, both solo and in groups. The event was co-ordinated by P S Subramanian Secretary of Shanmukhapriya, Smt Jayasree Nair Senior dance teacher, choreographer and Director of Upasana Dance Academy, Chedda Nagar and her husband Sudhakaran Nair.

On February 1, the first day of Natyanjali 2018, after the 'Deepojwala' (lamp lighting) by Guru Kalyanasundaram, Deepak Mazumdar, Bragha Bessel, P.S. Subramanian and others, senior dance teachers of Mumbai in various classical styles performed *Nrutnamaalika* as an offering to Lord Nataraja. Noted Bharatanatyam exponents namely Geetha Venkateswar, Mallika Valsalan, Manjula Manoj, Nandhini Ashok, Naresh Pillai, Nisha Gilbert, Padmini Radhakrishnan, Prema Nagasundaram, Suhasini Padale, Suman Badami, Tushar Sawant and Vijayalakshmi Ramanujam, Bhathanrityam exponents Aiswarya

Harish, Jayashree Rajagopalan, Kathak artistes Alakananda Mukherjee, Bhavisha Dedhia and Ruta Dixit, Kuchipudi artiste Vijayashree Pillai, Mohiniattam dancer Prathibha Jagannathan and Odishi dancer Anuradha Jalnawalla participated in *Nrutthamalika*,

It was followed by presentation of selected Bharatanatyam items by Smt. Bragha Bessel from Chennai. The first day programme was also part of the first ever NCPA Mumbai Dance Season.

As part of the Mumbai Dance season Shanmukhapriya also organised a full day long Lecture Demonstration at the temple complex on January 30, by senior classical dance exponents Dr. Jayashree Rajgopalan on *Nritta*

Karanas and Ms. Mandakini Trivedi on *Abhinaya*.

On all the days from February 2 to February 12, there were dance offering in various styles by more than 100 groups/solos from all over India and from abroad.

They were all well executed performances by students and teachers of several classical dance schools, namely Mohiniattam, Kathak, Bharatanatyam and Odissi styles and the artistes had come not only from Mumbai but also other cities like Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune, Coimbatore and even Singapore and Abu Dhabi.

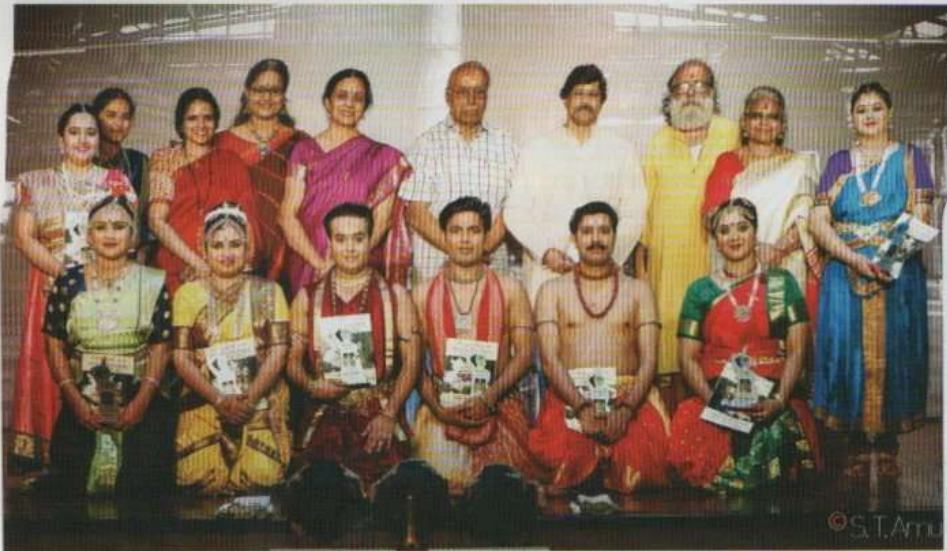
On February 13, the concluding day and coinciding with Mahashivaratri, around fifty dance teachers offered their



Padmashree Kalamandalam Kshemavathy lighting the lamp



Senior dance teachers who participated along with Smt Jayasree Nair and P S Subramanian



Dance teachers who participated along with local MLA Prakash Phatarphekar, P S Subramanian, Jayasree Nair and Sudhakaran Nair



Participants of Nruttamalika

Natyanjali for five minutes each at the feet of Lord Nataraja in their respective classical styles, in the presence of many Gurus and seniors and amidst chanting of Rudram and abhishekham of Lord Siva. Prasanna Nambiar, Lata Surendra, Girija Nair, Manjula Manoj, Vijayshree Pillai, Kalamandalam Kshemavathy, Sujatha Nair and many other distinguished artistes performed on this day.

Students of dance institutes in Mumbai namely Nrityaprabha, Nalanda Nrityakala Mahavidyalaya Kalakshetram, Shree Paavitra Arts Academy, Souparnika Dance Academy, Samskara Academy of Fine Arts, Swaralaya Academy, Atharva School of Fine Arts, Bharatanatyam Kalalaya, Nruthanjali, Sriguruji Art Academy, (Bharatanatyam), Geetha Vijayshankar's Gitanjali, (Mohiniattam), Swapnokalpa Dance School, (Odissi), Sharada Sangeet Vidyalaya Mumbai (Kathak), Kerala Kalamandalam, Kalashree Nrithalay Pune, Kalaranga School Bangalore Kalakshetra Foundation Chennai, and many other institutions of various classical dance styles participated in the Natyotsav and Nataraja Aradana during the Natyanjali 2018 festival.

Natyanjali Mumbai completes its 14th year this year and is growing in popularity year after year. It has also become a catalytic force in developing an atmosphere of camaraderie and co-operation among the art fraternity, specially classical dances. ■

True independence Dropped off?



Vidhya Vasudevan

■ Recently, I have been thinking about independence. Repeatedly, we call ourselves independent when we start making decisions for ourselves or earning

our living. When it comes to financial independence, it makes sense when we grow up and start working, we become financially independent from our parents. However, what about the choices and decisions that we make? Are they truly independent?

An adjective 'independent' is defined as 'not depending on another for livelihood' or 'free from outside control' or 'thinking or acting for oneself.'

My problem with this definition is that in our complex world it's almost impossible not to be influenced by anything or anyone.

Unless we live a life of a hermit who is hidden away from society &

technology, today's generation people get surrounded by *society, discussions, media* which subconsciously form our opinions on different topics. Even to make our life choices, our mind is build up with images with things to do and not to



do. These are either planted by our *family, friends, the books we read* or even by the kind of *programs* we must have watched in television. In this complex structure, can our opinions and decisions be truly and utterly independent of "OURS"?

In the end, I believe that we have one choice that we can indeed make. We can choose the sources of influence. We can choose *who we spend time with, what we read or watch*. In this way at least we can somewhat independently form our

way of thinking. We have a mind, we should learn how to use it. There are two levels of mind *the conscious* and *the subconscious*. We think with our *conscious mind* and whatever habitually we think sinks down into the *subconscious mind*. If we think good, good will follow; if we think evil, evil will follow.

You are the captain of your soul (subconscious mind) and the master of your fate. Your imagination took you to the bottle; let it take you to freedom by imagining you are free. Remember, you have the capacity to choose consciously.

Choose life! Choose love! Choose health! Choose happiness!



50th Wedding (Golden) Anniversary of Adv Padma Divakaran & Mr K V Divakaran was celebrated on a grand scale on February 12, 2018, attended by her daughters, Rakhee and Reshma, sons in law Sunil and Hari, grandchildren Nikita, Harsh and Ved, relatives and friends. Kerala In Mumbai wishes the Golden Couple many more years of love, happiness and togetherness.



ACTRESS SRIDEVI IS NO MORE

The Star Suddenly Vanished Into The Sky

Sending shock waves among her fans, admirers and acquaintances, the 54 year old movie star Sridevi died on February 24 towards midnight after a cardiac arrest at Dubai where she went to attend a wedding of one close relative. Since she was 4, she started acting in movies in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and Hindi movies. She also donned the mantle of producer.

She is survived by her husband Boney Kapoor and daughters Jahnvi and Khushi. Sridevi was accompanied to Dubai by Boney Kapoor and daughter Khushi, to attend the marriage of Mohit Marwah, nephew of Boney Kapoor.



Sridevi with family

Born August 13, 1963, Sridevi made her film debut as a child actor at the age of four in *Thunaivan*, a Tamil film directed by M.A. Thirumugham. She left the industry in 1997 to raise her children. During her career, she won five Filmfare Awards: three for Hindi films and one each for Tamil and Telugu films. Her comeback was with *English Vinglish* in 2012.

In Malayalam

In Malayalam She made her debut in the industry with the film *Kumara Sambhavam*, directed by P

Subramaniam. However, it was *Poompaatta* in 1971 that got her the State Award for the Best Child Actor. The film, directed by B K Pottekkad, threw light on the life of a child, who gets trapped in her mother's friend's house, post her death, and she is tormented.

The actress had collaborated with the late director IV Sasi for a few films such as *Aalinganam* (1976), *Aasheervadam* (1977), *Aa Nimisham* (1977), *Anthardaaham* (1977), *Akale Aakasham* (1977) and *Oonjaal* (1977).

She had acted with actors such as

Madhu, Sheela, Adoor Bhasi, Jayan, Kaviyoor Ponnammamma and many others. While her chemistry with actor Kamal Haasan was so intense that it paved for a collaboration of around 30 films, which includes Malayalam films such as *Sathyavan Savithri*, *Kuttavum Shikshayum*, *Nirakudam*, *Aasheervadam* and Adoor Bhasi directorial *Aadhya Paadam*. After a long hiatus, Malayalis could get to see her in *Devaragam*, directed by Bharathan, which set yet another milestone in her career.

Sridevi acted in about 72 Tamil

movies and some of them were with Rajinikant and Kamalahaasan, often Rajini in a negative role.

In Hindi

Sridevi made her debut in Hindi films, "Julie," (1975) which marked her first foray into Bollywood at the age of 12. In this film she acted as the younger sister of Lakshmi and this film was a remake of 'Chattakkari' a Malayalam movie directed by K S Sethumadhavan. He directed Julie also. In a way Sethumadhavan introduced her to Hindi films. Her first leading Bollywood role came in the 1979 Hindi film "Solva Sawan."

With Solva Sawan in 1979, Sridevi got busy with her Hindi projects, as the audience there embraced her wholeheartedly. Four years later, Sridevi broke through to the list of Bollywood's most highly sought-after actresses with the action comedy "Himmatwala."

Sridevi's credits include some of the most watched films of the '80s and '90s, including "Mawaali" (1983), "Tohfa" (1984), "Mr. India" (1987), "Chandni" (1989), "Lamhe" (1991) and "Gumrah" (1993).

Sridevi took a break from the limelight to raise two children with her husband, producer Boney Kapoor, before returning to star in the 1997 film "Judaai." In the film, she plays an ambitious housewife who inadvertently marries a man who can't afford the



Sridevi with parents



Sridevi as stepmother of Rajinikant

lavish life she aspires to lead.

The film was a box office hit, but it was Sridevi's performance in Gauri

Shinde's 2012 hit, "English Vinglish," that really confirmed her comeback as one of Bollywood's most treasured and enduring talents.

Sridevi took the starring role of Shashi, an Indian housewife who only speaks Hindi but is thrust onto the streets of New York to help arrange her niece's wedding. After a series of humiliations, Shashi decides she needs to learn English and enrolls in a four-week crash course.

Besides personalities from the movie world, President Ramnath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress President Rahul Gandhi were some of the leaders from the political world who paid rich tributes to the first female super star of Indian Cinema. ■

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MAGNIFICENT DELUSIONS EXPOSES

Ramachandran

Husain Haqqani, former Ambassador of Pakistan to United States and also author of 'India Vs Pakistan: Why can't we just be friends?' and 'Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military' has written another book thrown light on the various facets of foreign policy of Pakistan since its birth. Titled 'Magnificent Delusions.' It has, like his other books, also has a subtitle: Pakistan, The United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstanding.

Haqqani was a trusted advisor to Pakistan PM Benazir Bhutto and later to President Asif Ali Zardari. According to him, since the inception of Pakistan, its rulers always displayed deceit and believed that a thousand lies would make one truth. Even after seven decades, they still cling to that time tested technique of misconstrued stories while dealing with United States and European countries. United States determined to defeat Communism and terrorism, always pretended to believe the Pakistanis and conceded financial and military equipments to them with the condition that their assistance could be used only against communist expansionism and fight against terrorism and not against India. Pakistan agreed to the conditions and did what they were not supposed to do. Once one condition was that Pakistan would not attempt making nuclear bomb. Pakistan agreed and after getting the necessary funds, invited Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, a Pakistani nuclear



Husain Haqqani

scientist working in Europe, who was accused of clandestinely selling nuclear secrets stolen from his workplace to Iran, North Korea and Jordan. When US realised the truth, they continue to aid it with a new condition that it should not be used for bombs. When Pak flouted that condition too, it was revised to non-testing of bomb. The story moved similarly forward.

It is very rare that someone writes truth about the events staged behind curtains and still remains alive in a country of bigotry. Pakistan is one day older than India as an independent nation but decades behind in progressive ideas and development. The reader will be bewildered to know how a country can mislead its own people for decades and get away with it. Our own Chanakya is a poor student before the religious bigots of political leaders and

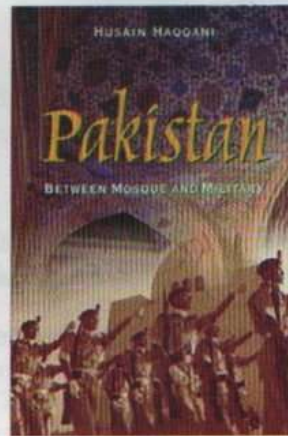
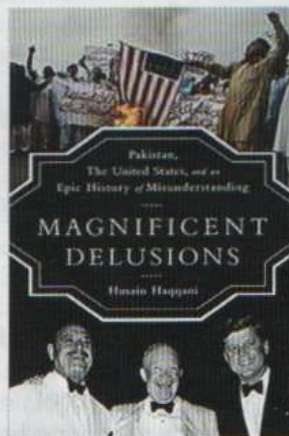
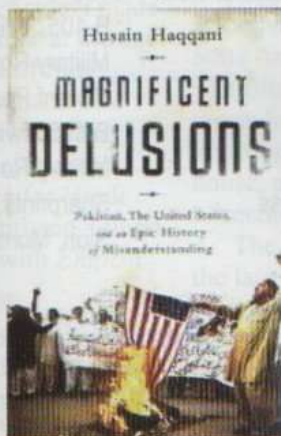
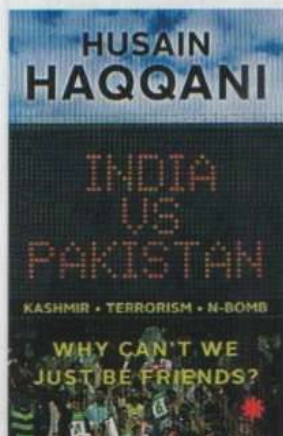
military autocrats, the latter being superior to the former, leading to the utter failure of democratic values in that country.

Barrister Mohammedali Jinnah was basically a nationalist and was an intelligent freedom fighter who turned opposite when he realised in a Hindu majority country, it would be tough for him to be at the administrative head. The demand for a separatr country for Indian Muslims was made only in 1940. That even after the partition, one third of the total Muslims in India chose to stay where they were, despite having the liberty to move to a Muslim State. This fact indicates the falsehood that the Muslim minority in India would not be safe in a Hindu majority country.

While being a most modern western fashionist imitating all that the British leaders did outward, he turned to be an apostle of Islamic teachings before his own religious leaders. When the time moved closer to the date of independence, people who knew him very closely were amused at a Jinnah who dressed like a Muslim religious leader during daytime change into western attire once he reached home in the evening and lift a glass of liquor to relax. His supporters and assistants believed him totally and followed him to the hilt. They were shocked when Jinnah breathed his last within less than two years of freedom and could not answer the questions of western journalists regarding the aims and objectives of an independent Pakistan. Pakistan sided with modernists as well as their antagonists in Islamic countries. Years later, East Pakistan got separated to

form Bangladesh is another irony.

In his argument favouring partition, Haqqani quotes Jinnah, "Why a hundred million Muslims should become a minority in a Hindu dominated Government?" and went on "the safeguards for a



Books by Husain Haqqani

minority in a united India were worthless because in the event of an appeal by the minority, the accused would sit as the judges of the accusers.” Later he points out when Pakistan was under (ex) military rulers, the judgements of the Supreme Court were decided by the rulers.

The leaders who succeeded Jinnah in the government had no idea how to bring progress and development to the people who trusted their leaders blindly while the leaders worked hard to make themselves filthy rich and powerful. All prime ministers miserably failed to rein the military heads though they were very careful in selecting the most humble and presumably supportive Generals. Once at the helm, the Generals turned against their masters and threw them out and one was even falsely implicated and hanged. No political leader ever thought that Ayub, Yahya, Zia-ul-Haq or Pervez Musharraf would overthrow them soon after they were appointed.

On Kashmir

The entire foreign policy of Pakistan was decided on the basis of Kashmir and the presumed attack by India. A recent controversy out of a statement made in the Indian Parliament that, had Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was PM of India soon after independence, Kashmir problem would not have arisen, compels one to delve into Haqqani's version. He says Patel was initially agreeable for Kashmir going to Pakistan as it had a majority of Muslims with a Hindu Head, he changed his stance (on the same day) when he came to know that Junagadh was annexed to Pakistan. Junagadh was a princely state with a Muslim head and Hindu majority of



Haqqani with Nirupama Rao



The last meeting before partition

people. Since Pakistan army was headed by a British officer limited a declaration of war against British loyal Kashmir Raja and his ill-equipped force. A war was thus avoided but Pakistan used a non-military strategy of sending a trained tribal force to capture the state; the first time deployment that still

continues. King Hari Singh with active support of Shaikh Abdulla who detested Pakistan, sought military help from India. Nehru in consultation with Patel refused to intervene since Kashmir was not a part of India and Hari Singh sent his letter for accession to India. Government of India then sent its army



Field Marshal Ayub Khan, Indian PM Lal Bahadur Shastri and USSR PM Kosigin after signing Tashkent declaration.



Lt Gen Niazi signs the Instrument of Surrender. Indian Lt Gen Jagat Singh Aurora looks on.



After signing the Shimla Agreement, Indian P M Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto shake hands while Benazir and Swaran Singh look on.

to protect Kashmir from Pakistan. Alas, by the time a part of Kashmir was already occupied and it continues to be so following UN intervention.

Haqqani points out that whenever a civilian head of government attempted to improve the Indo-Pak relations, the Generals sabotaged them. After getting defeated in the war, the civilian head would rush to US pleading their intervention. Once the matter is settled, Pakistan always painted that their army defeated in the Indian forces and accused the civilian head for not allowing the gains to Pak. Even after the Bangladesh war of 1971, despite the Pak surrender and ninety thousand Pak soldiers were taken as prisoners of war and brought to India to be returned to Pak once Bhutto and Indira agreed on a treaty. Bhutto pleaded with Indira to help him to remain in power so that he could settle the Kashmir issue amicably

later. Indira conceded and it was treated as a victory for Pakistan.

India Centric

Pakistan always sought financial and military aid from other countries especially US, using the ploy that India was keen to see Pakistan destroyed. On several occasions, Pandit Nehru and later Indira Gandhi publicly announced that India recognised Pakistan and extended hands of friendship but those friendly gestures were repelled. Shastry Ayub Khan (Tashkent), Indira-Bhutto (Shimla), Vajpayi-Musharaf (Agra) are all examples of these events. Pak always obtained their military aids as free or long term loan from other countries but any help received for development or other purposes were always diverted to military needs. Though US on several times told them that they could provide funds for development but not for

military purposes, Pakistan often received it in reduced measure by pleading, pressurising or by blackmailing. Even after terrorist attack on World Trade Centre in New York, Pakistan received huge amount of assistance by promising to help track the terrorists but did not implement the promise. Finally US had to do it by itself in utmost secrecy, violating sovereignty of Pakistan though they thanked Pak government for helping them to attain the objective (in order to protect the government from public anger). As compensation it obtained more funds and military assistance.

When we go through the narration of Haqqani, we realise that Pakistan never kept its promises during the last seven decades and is managing to survive with US charity.

Magnificent Delusions is a fantastic book coming from a Pakistani who acted as its ambassador, of all countries, to US and received the warm trust from the Pakistani President as well as the US President but had to resign for having said the truth and had to undergo virtual prison in Pak. After having released by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, he left Pakistan and now serve as Professor in Boston University.

For any person interested in knowing Indian as well as world history, it is a must read book and we strongly recommend. The problem is, once you start reading it, you wouldn't be able to stop reading until it is over. ■

[Magnificent Delusions by Husain Haqqani, published by Public Affairs, 250 West 57th Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10107. Pages 415 inclusive of Notes and Index. Price \$28.99. Available with Amazon for around Rs 700.]



Vajpayi - Musharaf



Haqqani with former Pakistan President Sardari

In pursuit of Love

Chitra S Menon

When *Premalekhanam* of Vaikom Muhammad Basheer was published in 1943, it was banned by Sir C P Ramaswamy Iyer, Diwan of Travancore, not because the book contained vulgar innuendoes or undesirable political comments but because its hero Kesavan Nair, a Hindu fell in love with Saramma, an educated but unemployed Christian girl and they started talking about getting married. Intercaste marriages were taboo those days.

We have 'Mohini' a compilation of 101 'poems' penned by eternal lover Jagathi Sreekantan Nair, before us. If Sir CP was alive today and if he was Diwan of the Travancore, definitely, Mohini would have undoubtedly faced the same fate not because it depicted love between two people belonging to different religions but since no religion was mentioned, any religious person could have filed an FIR against the poet claiming that the beautiful heroine belonged to his religion and hence the poems not once but more than hundred times hurt his religious sentiments. The poet would not have any chance of coming out of his prison during his lifetime (assuming one year per poem).

The poet addresses through each of his poems a lovely girl and tells her about her enchanting beauty. It would be difficult for any talented poet to write a *Premalekhanam* to his lady love everyday without committing replication but *Mohini* would certainly come to his rescue if his ladylove has not already had her fingers on this book. After reading this compilation of poems, any adolescent or young male might be tempted to copy one poem each to present to the girl whom he had a crush on and thus would create a storm among the young world.

Nature has injected certain hormones into the veins of human beings to make the opposite gender to move closer and remain attached for a lifetime. The institution of marriage reinforced this association and is treated as sacred since the times of Vedas. The oldest books and their subsequent



variants such as Upanishads, mythologies etc strengthen this view. Man's ability to visualise or imagine things in his favour adds glamour to this ability. Once a man develops a kind of attraction for a particular woman, she transforms from her ordinary looks into a nymph and in his eyes she becomes an entity of all good qualities. If she reciprocates this feeling, they are said to be in love. If the female is not reciprocating, the male might do anything or go to any length to possess her. Very rarely he would think

വേറെയാണു വിചാരമെങ്കിലും
നേരമായത് ചൊല്ലുവാൻ
വെറുതെ ഞാനെത്തിനെരിയും
വെയിലത്ത് കയിലും കുത്തി നടക്കേണ്...
and go along his own way.

The entire human civilization and history are built on this imagination and the actions taken to make those imaginations into a reality. The imaginations go to inexplicable length and dimensions and make the partners dream in metaphoric terms. The entire literary world, starting from Ramayan to this day's novelette or short story rests on this base.

As the title *Mohini* indicates, it is about a female character, unnamed, and the dreams woven around a female, alluring her looks and actions as never before. The name tells us that the female

is extraordinarily beautiful, tempting and enchanting. The poet dedicates everything good he feels about on her and we have a book of love and romance with us.

The shortest poem of this book takes only five lines and the longest reaches upto nineteen lines. A few years ago no poet would have dared to write poems being complete in odd number of lines. Certain lines have only one syllable while some may have even seventeen syllables. In this sense, the poet belongs to the modern genre. Meters and figures of speech do not discourage the poet anywhere and the poetry comes out like a freshly crushed coffee bubbles from a cup. If anyone thinks of translating these poems, he would be mentally disturbed as the ideas are not amenable to translation. It is much beyond it.

The book is dedicated to Bhaskaran Master, the man who submitted all his romantic leanings to Kairali at an early period. His influence on Sreekantan Nair is very much there on each poem. What differentiates them is that while Bhaskaran used rhyming, rural metaphors and regional slangs, Sreekantan Nair is modern and free from such clutches. T P Sasthamangalam who writes the Introduction does not touch the poems at all, as it is understandable. Prof Pankajakshi Rajagopal presents this work before the readers and she has done her level best to delve into the depths of the poems. Not surprising, a lot of (printer's) devils have crept into the book as no one would be able to concentrate while doing the typesetting as the words used in these poems have that magical influence on them to err. Certain complex characters are missing while certain other characters are misplaced. One can without any complex say that the reader too would miss those errors while reading.

If a second edition comes soon, I wouldn't be surprised.

[*Mohini* a compilation of 101 short poems. Written by Jagathi Sreekantan Nair and published by Paridhi Publications, M P Appan Road, Thycaud, TVM 695014. Pages 66 and priced Rs 100.]

MOHAMMED RAFI

A PHENOMENON



■ We have celebrated the 92nd birth anniversary of the late Mohammed Rafi on 24th December, 2017. Rafi was born on 24th December 1924 at

Damodaran Unny Amritsar, Punjab. A truly deserving case for Bharath Ratna, even posthumously has been denied to him and none of his fans is happy with this. Even those who are considering other playback singers as good will agree that Rafi Saheb was the only singer who possessed all the qualities required for a singer. Good voice, classical training, proper diction, correct expression, voice modulation, clarity in base voice and Sur merge, Mohd Rafi emerges. Apart from this, he was a gem of a person, egoless, down to earth, non controversial, a rare quality among film folks. Rafi was undoubtedly instrumental in changing the very concept of playback singing. He was an expert in this art and could pick up a word with ease, play with its variation in diction shifting the emphasis from one syllable to the other and had the unique ability to synchronise his voice with the concerned actor's mannerisms. No wonder, he literally created stars like Pradeep Kumar, Bharath Bhushan, Jeetendra etc on whom some of the best Bollywood songs were picturised. Even Shammi Kapoor has openly acknowledged with all the humility that without Rafi Saheb he would have remained also a mere actor. Shammi was proud to say that he could create a style for himself and had requested several times Rafi saheb to change his style of singing a little bit to suit his style of acting and Rafi used to oblige him without questioning eventually resulting in gems like *Yahoo Chahe koi muje jungle kahe, Aasman se aaya farishta, Tarif karum kya uski, yar chulbhula hai, saverevali gadi se, Yum tho humne lakh haseen dekha hai, Tum se Acha kon hai* etc. The only other singer who could create such effect was T M Soundara rajan of the South.

While most of the other singers were typecast in a particular style



Mohammed Rafi

(Talath for gazal, Manna Dey for classical, Hemant for love/sentimental, Mukesh for pathos etc.), Rafi was a complete singer who could sing in all genres romantic, emotional/sentimental, comic/gazals/classical/semi classical / kawali, patriotic, Bhajans etc. with ease sometimes inventing his own style like "*Telmali Sar jo tera*" in Pyasa for Johny Walker. Rafi clearly understood the situation in the film before recording a song and his total dedication clearly reflected in his rendering a song for a particular scene in a movie creating a breathtaking atmosphere in the particular scene. Like "*Chal ud jare Panji*" from Bhabhi or "*Kal chaman aur aaj yeh sehra hua*" from Khandan or "*Babul ki duvayen lethi ja*" from Neelkamal or "*Dil Ek Mandir hai*" with Suman Kalyanpur, the last song paying tributes to a cancer specialist sacrificing his own life to save the life of the husband of his ex lover. Every music lover, especially lovers of old songs could identify the actor after listening to the audio of Rafi. And this clearly indicates the electrifying effect he created in almost all the songs under the able music directors who had immense respect for him.

O P Nayyar was a great music director who had the courage to altogether stop his association with Lataji and replace her with Ashaji for

some personal reasons and was highly successful in creating lovely duets of Rafi and Asha. O P Nayyar whose chemistry with Rafi Saheb was great, had to impose some discipline on Rafi on one occasion when Rafi happened to visit the recording studio late due to some reasons beyond his control. Singer Mahendra Kapoor who had great admiration for Rafi Saheb was also present there much earlier. For the Sharmila-Bishwajit starrer "*Yeh Rath phir na aayegi*" Nayyar was to record the song "*Mera pyar woh hai ki markar bhi tumko judha aapni bahom se hone na dega*" in Rafi's voice. As Rafi was not available, Nayyar asked Mahendra Kapoor to record the song in his voice with the intention of changing the track when Rafi comes. Kapoor sang it beautifully and Rafi arrived late. By the time Nayyar had cooled down and accepted Rafi's reasons for delay and suggested that he should sing the song again to replace the recording done in Kapoor's voice. After listening to the track, Rafi was so happy that he insisted that the song be retained in Kapoor's voice which was brilliant and convinced OP to retain the track and ultimately OP, Rafi and Kapoor hugged each other and the song was retained in the voice of Kapoor. That was Rafi, a thorough gentleman! He used to encourage other singers as well. Remuneration was

never a concern for him. He never attempted to sing a song after settling the remuneration and never thought of quitting on payment issues. The only dispute he had with Lataji was on Royalty issues. He was of the view that after receiving the payment for a particular song, one has no moral right to royalty. They neither talked to each other for six years nor recorded any song together until SD Burman nite organised in Mumbai where they shared the stage together and sang duets. In 1960 the producers of the famous movie KOHINOOR gifted him something along with some flowers as they felt guilty for not incorporating Rafi song in the movie initially but subsequently the song happened to be the key factor for the tremendous success of the movie. Rafi accepted the flowers but refused to accept the gift. He said that Public has accepted his song and that was the greatest gift for him. "Madhuban me radhika nache re", apparently was the song and the song created a sensation even in Binaca Geetmala with Dilipkumar giving a fine performance as the hero singing in front of the evergreen Meenakumari dancing.

Once S D Burman was trying to record an important song in Kala Bazar in Rafi's voice. However, the lyrics writer was not ready with the proper words suitable to the scene. It was midnight and the entire unit was anxious to complete the recording before dawn. Burmanji told the writer confidently, he could do it and he would do it and precisely this is what happened as visualised by S D. The lyricist in a different mood came to the balcony looked at the sky and watched the lovely moon hidden amidst the clouds. The sky was open and thus came some scintillating words from his heart "Khoya khoya chand, khula aasman" a gem of a beauty song was born. The recording was completed to the satisfaction of all and the rest was history.

Even though Rafi had a temporary "eclipse" from the scene with the emergence of Kishore with *Roop tera masana, mere sapnon ki rani, kuch tho log kahenge* etc Kishore himself had admitted that certain songs only Rafi saheb could sing. That is why he prevailed upon Laxmikant Pyarelal to prevail upon Rafi to sing the most

important song for Hathi mere Sathi "Nafrath ki duniya ko chodkar" as he confessed Rafi only could do justice to the song. In fact they were good friends and Kishore da held him in high esteem. After the sad demise of Rafi, Kishore wept like a child in front of his body.

He was recipient of six Filmfare awards, one National award and Padmasri. He has sung in various Indian languages, even foreign languages. Unfortunately he could not sing a Malayalam song unlike Manna Dey and Lataji. Starting his career staying in a 10x10 room in crowded Bhendi Bazar area, he reached the pinnacle of glory by his hard work and total dedication. He breathed his last on 31.7.1980 at the age of 55. The last song recorded in Rafi's voice by L P was "Shaam phir kyon udas hai Dost? Tu kahim aaspas hai dost?" symbolically referring to his thousands of friends. Singers like Shreya Ghosal, Sonu Nigam, Mahendra Kapoor, Shabir Kumar, Mohd Aziz, Udit Narayan and Anwar were inspired by him.

Singers may come and go, but the one like Rafi coming again "Muskil hi nahim na mumkin hai!" He was really a phenomenon! ■

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Dr Geeta Madhavan

HYDERABADI BIRIYANI

(The flavourful rich rice preparation local to Hyderabad)

INGREDIENTS

All vegetables (cut in 1" pieces)
(Cauliflower florets 1 cup, beans 1 cup, potato 1 cup, Onions 2 cups (finely chopped), Onion 1 cup (finely sliced), Tomato 1 cup (chopped),
Basmati rice 2 cups salted
For masala: frozen grated Coconut 1 cup, Red chilly powder 2 spoons, Coriander stalks,
Garam Masala 2 tsp, garlic ½ cup finely chopped
Ginger 2 tsp (grated), Cloves- 2, Cinnamon 2 medium sized sticks.

METHOD

1. Powder the frozen coconut and keep aside.
2. Fry half of the chopped onions and garlic in ghee.
3. Add all the masala, coriander, coconut and stir occasionally.
4. Add the tomatoes and fry.
5. Steam all vegetables with salt and turmeric powder.
6. Cook basmati rice with salt, 2 tbsp ghee, clove and cinnamon.
7. Cool and separate the grains.
8. Fry the sliced onions golden brown and keep aside.
9. Take a pot and make layers of rice, followed by vegetables, top with golden brown onions.
10. Serve hot with curd.

Courtesy: Southern Twist
by Dr. Geeta Madhavan



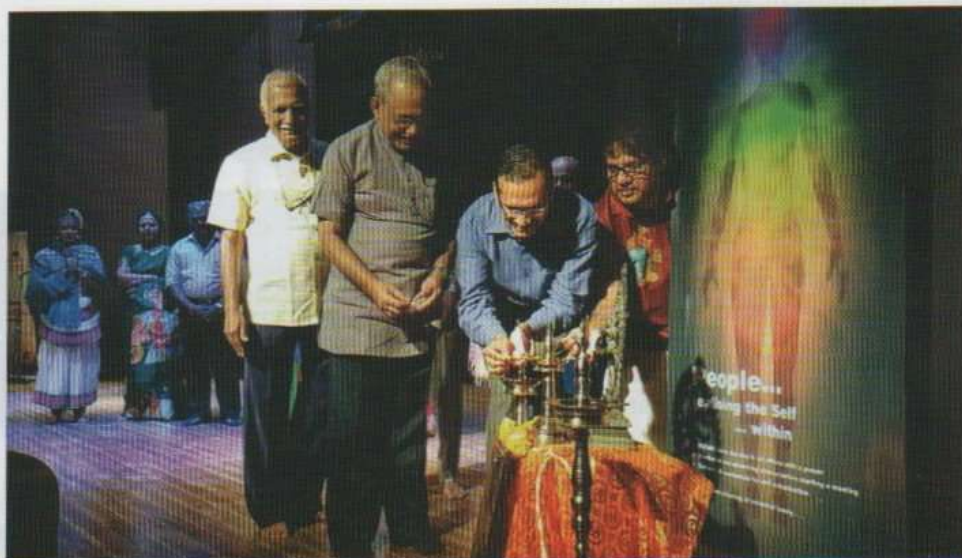
Warrier Foundation cultural extravaganza

■ Warrier Foundation organised a cultural extravaganza of Indian classical dance styles on February 18, at the Nahar International School auditorium. The programme titled 'Mera Shyam' (Love for Krishna) was organised for raising funds for the Njana Seva Kendra (Knowledge Service Centre). It is being developed at Anakatty in Palghat district, 30 kms away from Coimbatore. It is a community development programme for sustainable livelihood enhancement of tribals and education of under-privileged children. The inaugural function of the Njana Seva Kendra was held on February 25.

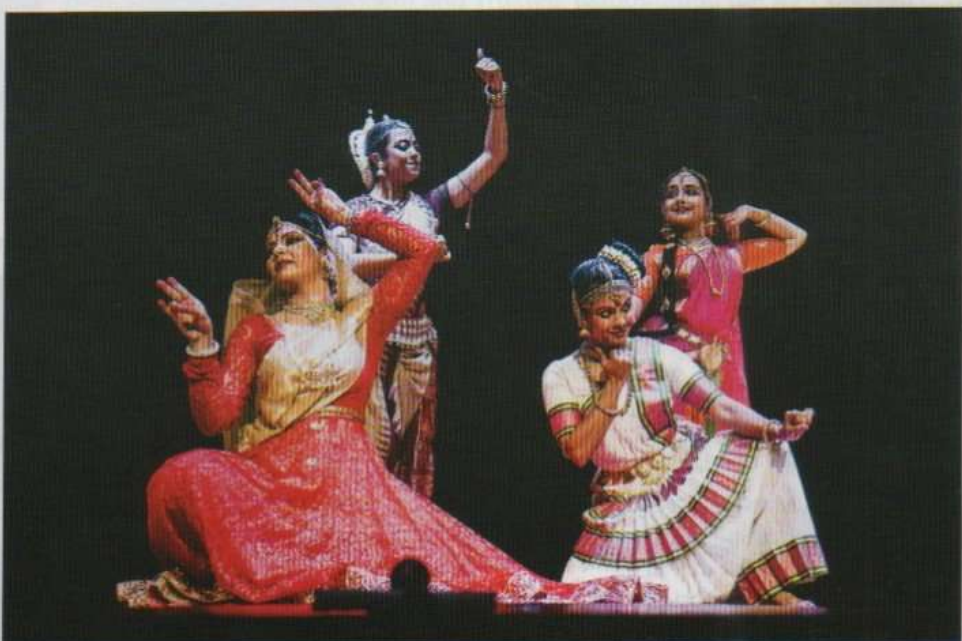
The lighting of the lamp ceremony was performed by Venugopal, Vice President, Reliance Industries, followed by V N Gopalakrishnan, journalist, Prakash Warrier, Counselor, Manoj Kumar (Ceat Tyres) and Janardhan, spiritual guide.

The cultural programme commenced with a divine atmosphere filled with Vedic chants by students of Warrier Foundation Veda Patashala. Students of Panvel Balmandiram also presented a beautiful Yoga dance showcasing their immense flexibility, agility, strength and deep concentration.

Utsav Music's *Mera Shyam* included classical dance styles of Kathak, Odissi, Mohiniattam, and kuchipudi highlighting the love and longing of women for Lord Krishna. The romance of Radha by Vidha Lal (Kathak), *vatsalya* of Yashoda by Divya Warier (Mohiniattam), the erotic love of Satyabhama by Prateeksha Kashi (Kuchipudi) and the divine love of Meera by Shashwati Garai Ghosh (Odissi) were portrayed beautifully by all the artistes. It was a visual treat and a unique synthesis of poetry, music and



During the inaugural function



Mera Shyam Dance Performance

movement. The artistes in beautiful synergy concluded with *Madhurashtakam* - with Love for Krishna- the eternal lover being the

underlying theme.

Vidha Lal, disciple of Smt. Geetanjali Lal is an empanelled artiste of India Council for Cultural Relations

and an A grade Kathak artiste of Delhi Doordarshan. Divya Warier, disciple of Smt. Jayashree Nair and Dr. Neena Prasad is an A grade Mohiniattam and Bharatanatyam artiste of Mumbai Doordarshan. She has worked as an Assistant Choreographer on the movie *Padmavat*. Prateeksha Kashi, a celebrated performer of Kuchipudi and choreographer is an A grade artiste of Bangalore Doordarshan Kendra. Shashwati Garai Ghosh, a disciple of Smt. Sharmila Biswas is an accomplished Odissi artiste and she runs Angashuddhi, an Odissi dance institute in Kolkatta. Shawls were presented to all the artistes and guests by A S Madhavan, Managing Trustee of Warrier Foundation.

Warrier Foundation is presently educating 300 children at four Centres and aims at providing free education,



Yoga Dance

food, shelter and healthcare to 1,000 children in the near future. Philanthropic-minded people and well-wishers are welcome to support this

noble endeavour. For details, visit the website: www.warrierfoundation.org or follow on Facebook @warrierfoundation.

Marriage Meet

■ Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti organized its 38th Marriage Meet on February 24 at its Chembur Complex in which many eligible young men and women and guardians and parents participated. There were a few eligible participants from Mauritius and Canana as well.

Mumbai Zone Jt Customs Commissioner Chintha Anna Isaac inaugurated the event. Chintha applauded the efforts of the Samiti in not only successfully organising the Marriage Meet every year but also having a Counselling team to advise young men and women who are about to get married so that they can embark on a successful and happy married life. President of SNMS N Sasidharan, Secretary N S Salim Kumar, P Prithviraj explained about the working of the Marriage Meet. Several SNMS members played an active role in conducting the Marriage Meet.



Anna Isaac Jt Customs Commissioner lighting the lamp

Mahashivaratri

■ Sri Sankara Mattham at Matunga had made elaborate arrangements for Mahashivaratri as the day also coincided with the important day of the Lord Maha Pradosham. After the Pradosha pooja, there was, Laksharchana with Bilwa leaves with the chanting of Om Namashivaya one lakh times. Maha Deeparadhana was performed early morning after all four Yaamas.



Mahashivaratri celebrations at Sankara Mattham Matunga



Dignitaries on stage

Nair Bhavan Inauguration and Silver Jubilee celebration

■ Nair Bhavan built by Ambernath Nair Seva Samiti at Ambernath West near Fr Agnel School, was inaugurated by Dr K Vijayan, former President and Trustee on February 3. Prior to the inauguration, a Road Show was conducted, starting at 5 pm, covering most part of Ambernath (East) and (West) and reaching Nair Bhavan at 8.30 pm. Many organisations and individuals offered a warm welcome to the roadshow.

NSS Ambernath celebrated its Silver Jubilee and Kudumba Sammelanam-2018 on February 4 from 5pm onwards at Mahatma Gandhi School Auditorium, Ambernath (W). There were cultural programmes performed by NSS Mahila Wing and Youth Wing where Swami Krishnananda Saraswati was the Chief Guest. Chithira Vijayan Nair, President of Nair Seva Samithi presided over the function and welcomed the guests. NSS Ambernath Secretary Rajendra Kurup, Mahila Wing President Smt. Santa S. Nair and Secretary Smt. Gayatri Surendran also spoke on the occasion. Guests of Honour included Ambernath MLA Dr. Balaji Kinikar, Shiva Sena Shehar Pramukh Arvind Walekar, KNSS President U Ramachandran, Vice President S R Pillai and General Secretary Harikumar Menon.

Others on stage were Dr. K. Vijayan (Trustee and Founder President), Treasurer R S Nair, Joint Secretary and Convenor of the programme Jayakumar Pillai and Youth Wing President Sanjog M. Nair. Senior Citizens were felicitated. Those above eighty years of age who were unable to attend due to ill health were felicitated in their home in advance and their video shown on that day. Meritorious students of Std10th &



Dr K Vijayan, former President and Trustee, inaugurating the Nair Bhavan



Lighting the inaugural lamp

12th were felicitated as also representatives of other organisations and Members who served NSS, Ambernath in the capacity of Trustee/committee members during the

last 25 years. NSS proposes to conduct various programmes like Medical camp, drawing competition, dance competitions, etc. at regular interval during this silver jubilee year.

Cinema Training Camp

■ Vittalwadi Malayali Samajam and Malayalam Foundation organised a Cinema Training Camp for cinema and Kanikonna students under the aegis of Popular Cine Director Babu Narayanan (Anil Babu) at Vithalwadi East Samajam Hall. Well known Mumbai businessman and film Producer Murali Mattumal inaugurated the event. After the formal welcoming of Babu Narayanan by Rajam Teacher and Samajam Vice President Sivanandan, Rajam Teacher, Kattoor Murali, Sunilraj of Nanma Charitable Foundation, P K Muralikrishnan, Manoj White John, P S Sumesh, Biju Raman, film actor Nimisha Nair spoke on the occasion.

Childrens Film Club Global Co-ordinator K V S Nelluvai said the the Camp's objective was to



Murali M addressing the audience.



Director Babu Narayanan with participants.

spread awareness among the participants about the art of film making. Nelluvai is a Malayalam Teacher of Malayalam Mission at VithalWadi Samajam. Many Malayalam Mission students and

others from different parts of Mumbai, interested in films, participated in the camp. Malayala Bhumi Chairman Sasidharan Nair mentioned that with the co-operation of Malayalam Foundation and other Samajams, they plan to conduct more such Cinema training camps in Mumbai and suburbs in the future.

Mannam Jayanthi at Thane Nair Welfare Association

■ Thane Nair Welfare Association celebrated 141st Mannam Jayanthi and 21st Annual Day on 26th January at St Lawrence College Auditorium. Association President K.R.Harikumar inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp at Acharya Mandapam. After the floral tribute made to Acharyan, Ladies wing and youth wing of the association conducted several programs like Thiruvuvathira, poetry recitation and cultural programmes etc. This year Thane Nair Mahasangam was inaugurated by PWD Minister Eknath Shinde. Congress Leader Manoj Shinde, eminent Malayalis VG Nair, Sachin Menon, Aravindaksha Menon, U Ramachandran, Harikumar Menon, S R Pillai, Peremlal, M.Kumaran Nair, Rajan Nair et al attended the function. Mannathacharya Puraskarm 2018 was presented to Pradeep Nair, M Kumaran Nair was felicitated for being selected in Loka Kerala Sabha and Aravind Menon was felicitated for being the topper of CAT exam 2017. Newly wed couples and elders were also felicitated during the programme. Cash awards were presented to S.S.C and HSC Toppers.



During Mannam Jayanti Celebrations



NANMA Supports tribal children

■ Nanma Charitable Foundation visited Plotpada village in Shahapur Taluka, Thane District of Maharashtra to provide educational & health support with the larger aim towards empowering the tribals of rural Maharashtra.

In the fourth one of a nine-phase initiative, the Nanma team distributed daily necessities such as tooth brushes, tooth pastes, soaps, biscuits, fruits to the tribals.

The team also distributed clothes to the children of anganwadi and primary school in the village. The programme was inaugurated by Bindumol, President of the Foundation and supported by team members Sreedevi Surendran, Sakthidharan Nair, Subin, Sharath Panicker, Aswin Pillai, Viraj, Vaishak, Sudev, Nandana, Manu Mathew, Shajimon, according to Sunil Raj, General Secretary of Nanma.



During the event

Doctrate For Sureshkumar Madhusudhanan



Sureshkumar Madhusudhanan, Managing Director of Seagull Group receiving the Ph. D in Human Resource Management.

■ Sureshkumar Madhusudhanan, Managing Director Of Seagull Group has been honoured with Ph. D in Human Resource Management by Commonwealth Vocational University, the Kingdom of Tonga. The Doctoral convocation was held at Hotel Baiyoke Sky, Bangkok, Thailand on February 16. Penisimani E'pensia Fifita, Minister

of Education, Kingdom of Tonga awarded the same. Hon. Dr. Foueti Motuhifonua, Chancellor, Commonwealth Vocational University, Hon. Dr. Jaran Maluleem, International Relations, Thammasat University, Hon. Dr. Aftab Anwar Shaikh, Pro Chancellor, Commonwealth Vocational University were present during the ceremony.

Presidential Award



M I Ramachandran

■ The Presidential Award for Specially distinguished and meritorious service has been announced on the occasion of Republic day 2018. M I Ramachandran, working as Senior Intelligence Officer in Directorate of Revenue Intelligence is one among the few who has been selected prestigious award this year. In a two and half decade old career in Central Excise, Customs, Service Tax and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ramachandran has booked and investigated some very important and sensational cases. He is a resident of Hiranandani Heritage, Kandivali West.

HKA Celebrates New Year

■ Hiranandani Keralite Association, Powai celebrated its New Year Function on 27th January, 2018 with zest, vibrancy and elation at Norita Grounds, Hiranandani Gardens, Powai. The event was organised by the youth and womens' wing with the active support of all the members of the Association.

Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, Former Home Minister of Kerala, was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Thomas Olickal, the President of Hiranandani Keralite Association, welcomed the audience. In his speech, Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan said, he was proud to address a gathering of so many successful Malayalees in Mumbai and referred to some of the great intellectual and cultural contributions of Malayalees in Mumbai. He further urged the gathering to continue to promote love and friendship among the community and never divide for caste or creed. Chairman S R Pillai, Secretary A N Shaji and Treasurer Mathew Mammen also addressed the gathering.

Dr Abraham Patani was honoured with the 'Best Entrepreneur Award' for his contributions to the field of pharmaceuticals. Paul Peringatt proposed a vote of thanks.

HKA Souvenir 2018 and a book of collection of poems by the name 'Mohini' by Shreekanth Nair were released by Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan.

The Youth Wing performed various dance sequences choreographed by Raj Nayak and Nikhil Nair that enthralled the guests. The guests were mesmerized by the solo numbers presented by Miss Reenu Mathew.

The compere for the function were Tarun Hariharan and Delvin Fernandes.



Inauguration of the New Year Celebrations



Dr Abraham Patani along with former Kerala Minister Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan and HKA Office bearers.



Dance Number by HKA Youth Wing.



Final Match players with LIC Dignitaries

DMS Volleyball Tournament

■ Malayali team Senth Masters from Mira-Byander Raised-Up the Champions Trophy of third Season LIC Volleyball Tournament organised by Dahisar Malayali Samajam. The LIC sponsored tournament was played on 4th of February at Dahisar Sports Foundation Ground, Dahisar (E). There

were 12 teams from City of Mumbai-Thane and Navi Mumbai. The event was inaugurated at 9.30 am by DMS Sports Committee Chairman and Vice President Shaji Alappadan followed by the First Ball Serviced by Samajam's Gen.Secratery Vikram Kurup.

There were two Groups A & B with 6 teams each, played League match, Semi's and Final. The final match was played between Senth Masters and Season 2 champions DSF A. LIC Dignitaries handed over the Winner and Runner-Up Trophies to Team Captains. Cash awards were distributed by Samajam Executive Committee members. Best All-Rounder, Best Spiker and Best Budding player

trophies and Cash awards also distributed during the prize ceremony function. The running commentary in English and Hindi by Nitin Swami and PJ Joseph offered very exciting moments to crowded spectators who were watching the game throughout the tournament.

The tournament organiser, Dahisar Malayali Samajam's aim is to promote volleyball in the land of Maharashtra where volleyball does not get much importance. LIC dignitaries thanked DMS and appreciated the organisers for conducting such a wonderful tournament and also expressed that they wished to continue to promote volleyball in the coming years.



Guru Prasanna Nambiar

Smt. Prasanna Nambiar, Director Nrityaprabha performed Kathakali (Sati from Dakshayagam) on 13th February 2018 on Mahashivaratri Day under the aegis of Shanmukhapriya at Thiruchembur Murugan Temple Chhedanagar Mumbai. Her students Keerthana, Sneha, Lavanya, Sharika, Ashwati and Niyati also performed Bharatanatyam at Nityanjali 2018 on 4th February 2018 at the same venue.



Cancer Camp conducted by Bombay Keraleeya Samaj Matunga.

AIMA remembers Rajan Katannappalli

■ All India Malayali Association (AIMA) organised a meeting to pay homage to Rajan Katannappalli. AIMA President Dr Aprain presided. Upendra Menon, K T Nair, T A Khalid, G Komalan, Mohan Kandathil, Adv Padma Divakaran, GAK Nair, Balasubrahmanian T, Rakhi Sunil, P N Muralidharan, Sasi Nair, A N Shaji, T Madhavan, Sakharia et al spoke on the occasion. President of Kandivli Malayali Samajam Ramakrishnan P C, General Secretary of Jogeshwari Malayali Samajam Madhusoodanan Nair and Rajendran participated.

AIMA Voice Music Contest 2018

■ All India Malayali Association is organising a Malayalam Music Contest for those singers residing outside Kerala. The audition for the singers of Maharashtra Chapter will be held on April 7 and 15. Singers between 10 and 15 will be in the junior group, while 16-25 years and those above 25 years will come under the category of Seniors and Super Senior groups respectively.

The last two groups will have their audition on April 7 while Junior group will have its audition on April 15 and the venue will be Kairali, Kairali Marg, Behind Sai Baba Mandir, Sector 8, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai. The Zone competition for Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa will be held on April 22 in Mumbai. Winners from all zones will participate in the final to be held in Kochi on May 26 and 27.

Four top persons from each group from the state level will take part at Zonal level and three top winners from each group from the Zonal level will compete at the All India Level.

Winners at the grand finale from each group will be presented Rs. 1,00,000, Rs.50,000 and Rs.25,000 respectively besides citation and trophy.

Those desiring to participate should register their names before March 31 with the State co-ordinators. Details will be available on www.myaima.org. For contacting over phone, please dial 9920902275 for AIMA voice co-ordinator. Filled in entry forms could be sent by post or by e-mail to Premkumar, A-403, Cyprus, Hiranandani Gardens, Powai, Mumbai 400 076. E-mail address: mahaaimavoice@gmail.com



Remembering late Rajan Katannappalli

BOOK RELEASE

Pampungal Publications released two Books at a book Release function held on February 4 at BKS School Auditorium, Vasai. Adv Padma Divakaran presided over the event while Mundoor Rajan of Pampungal Publications welcomed the audience and Bassein Kerala Samajam President inaugurated the same. Writer Girijavallabhan was the chief guest. Rajan Thekkumala's play Ee Punyabhumi was released by PVK Nambiar handing over the first copy to Unni Warrieth. Vinod Warrieth's

Vakkinte Vathayanam (Collection of Essays) was released by Girijavallabhan handing over the first copy to Jayanthan Nair, President Bhayandar Malayali Samajam. Premdas, former Kerala Samskarika Vedi President, TK Jose conveyed their congratulations during the function. Rajan Thekkumala's play Ee punyabhumi, directed by Rajendra Padiyur and produced by Bombay Keraleeya Samithi Malad was staged after the Book release function. Sureshkumar Kottarakkara co-ordinated the event.



Former Principal of St. Thomas English School, Kalyan Dr. Oommen David with H. G Geevarghese Mar Coorilos and others during its Golden Jubilee celebrations.



Cancer Camp Participants



Anamika Nair won the third prize at the Essay Competition conducted by Kerala Government's Malayalam Mission. Anamika, daughter of Sureshkumar Kottarakkara, is studying in Std VIII at Holy Family School Ulhas Nagar and is a kanikonna Student of Malayalam Mission class conducted by Ulhas Arts & Welfare Association.

Free Cancer Check Up Camp at Ulhas Nagar

■ Ulhas Nagar Arts and Welfare Association along with Saranalayam Cancer Centre Mumbai and other Malayali organisations conducted a free Cancer Check Up Camp on January 13 and 14 mornings at

Welfare High School.

Doctors from Indian Cancer Society Mumbai took lead in the camp along with officials of Saranalayam Cancer Centre.



During the Cancer Camp

Aksharakalari

■ Mulund Kerala Samajam has formed a wing for Arts -Literature and Culture - and named it Aksharakalari (Workshop of Letters). It was inaugurated in Vidyamandir School

Mulund (W) on February 11. Journalist N Sreejith inaugurated it in the meeting which was presided by Samajam President CKK Poduval.

Seagull bags the Best Overseas Recruiting & Staffing Organization

■ Seagull International has won the prestigious Economic Times ET NOW HR Talent Management Leadership Award for Best Overall Overseas Recruiting & Staffing Organisation Of The Year at the 26th World HRD Congress held at Hotel Taj Lands End Mumbai recently. The event was organized by Times of India Group. The Award was received by C P Shyam, General Manager of Seagull and Philp John, Business Development Manager from Dr. Arun Aroa, Ex Chairman of Times Group and Chairman of eAdvance Learning in the ceremony. Dr. Sanjay Muthal, Executive Director, Insist Search Firm, Core Team Member World HRD Congress was also present on the occasion.

Seagull International is an ISO 9001-2008 certified Global Human Resource Consultants recognized by Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, with Corporate Office at Mumbai and Branches at Kochi, Chennai and Overseas offices at UAE and Kuwait. With a 30-years footprint in this space, under the leadership of Dr. Sureshkumar Madhusudhanan, it has placed more than 60,000 candidates in GCC countries, and transformed into a full-fledged Global Corporate Human Resources Consultants from India over



C P Shyam, General Manager of Seagull International and Philp John, Business Development Manager receives the ET NOW HR Talent Management Leadership Award from Dr. Arun Aroa, Ex Chairman of Times Group and Chairman of eAdvance Learning. Dr. Sanjay Muthal, Executive Director, Insist Search Firm, Core Team Member World HRD Congress also seen in the picture.

past three decades. It has won the ASSOCHAM Services Excellence Awards-2017, for "Promoting Quality and Delivery for the Best Human Resource Consultants in India" in the Award ceremony held on 25th August 2017 in New Delhi. It has also been awarded as the "Best Recruitment Service Provider" in the 'Indian HR Convention HDM Award 2017' held on

15th December 2017 at Gurugram.

Dr. Sureshkumar Madhusudhanan is the National General Secretary of Federation of Overseas Recruitment Association of India (FORAI), an Apex body of all Regional HR Consultants Association in India and also the Secretary General of Indian Personnel Exports Promotion Council (IPEPCIL), Mumbai.



Mohiniattam presented by Geetha Vijayashankar's students at National festival Shivanjali organised by Dr Chitra Vishwanathan at Vasai. They also performed for Nattyanjali festival organised by Subramania Samaj at Chedda nagar.



Bombay Keraleeya Samaj, Matunga conducted its 53rd Walking Race at Shivaji Park on February 5. More than 100 competitors participated in it. Prizes were distributed to different age groups, both male and female.



Committee Members of LCMA along with P V Vijaykumar, President, Raagalaya Academy of Music and Arts at the inaugural ceremony.



Dr. Oommen David being felicitated at the hands of H.G Dr Mathews Mar Thimotheos for getting Educationist Idol Couple Award at St Mary's O S Church, Dombivli

Family meet

■ Lake City Malayali Association Thane (LCMA) conducted their Family Meet on Saturday February 24 in the evening at the Courtyard Restaurant lawn, Ghodbunder Road, Thane. The highlight of the Programme was a Musical Programme of Raagalaya followed by felicitations of various family members who excelled in various fields of activities, followed by dinner.

Mumbai Sahityavedi

■ Mumbai Sahityavedi conducted a discussion on 'Prameyathilinnu Kathayilekku' (From concept to Story). Novelist Balakrishnan introduced the topic. It is not easy to tell how the concept could translate into a story, he said. Normally it is a spark that falls into the mind and later transforms into a story, he remarked.

Writer Manasi presided over the discussion.

Murali J Nair presented two of his stories, Sophy and Death in the Afternoon. P S Sumesh initiated the discussion. Wilson Kuriakose, Dr A Venugopal, S Harilal, Dr PVN Nair, Sumesh Kaimal, Sriprasad, P Viswanathan, Santhosh Pallassana, Devan Tharappil, Kochukunju Pillai, Anita Panicker and C P Krishnakumar participated in the discussion. The discussion started after paying homage to former convenor the late Cheppad Somanathan.



Loka Kerala Sabha members with Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan

KERALA HOUSE RENT HIKE ISSUE

Favourable Response From Government

■ Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Tourism Minister Kadakampilly Surendran have assured the visiting Mumbai representatives that they are also in favour of withdrawing the increase of Kerala House rentals which was hiked recently and invited major protests from Mumbai Malayalees.

The recently elected Loka Kerala Sabha members from Mumbai Lion Kumaran Nair, Prince Vaidyan, Adv. Prema Menon, Jayaprakash P D, Bose Krishnamachari, Riyas Komu and Khader Haji were members of the visiting team. In the meeting held with Tourism Minister Kadakampilly



With Tourism Minister Kadakampilly Surendran

Surendran on the same day afternoon, members of Loka Kerala Sabha and 'Samara Samithi' leaders Pavithran

Kannoth, T N Hariharan, Valsan Moorkkoth and Sateesh Kumar also took part.

Vasai Fine Arts Festival

■ Vasai Fine Arts Festival was held during Feb 23 to 25. During the festival Smt Alamelu Mani, Carnatic vocal artist and mother of playback singer Hariharan was awarded for her services to the classical art form. It was held in Sainagar Grounds at 6.30 pm with fusion music by Palakkad Sriram. On 24th, there was classical bhajan led by Surya Gayathri. Then there was triple Thayambaka of Kaloore Ramankutty Marar, Kaloore Unnikrishnan and Kaloore Jayan. On Feb 25, music director Sharath presented musical programme.

V T Gopalakrishnan Award

■ The twentieth V T Gopalakrishnan Award for the best literary work of the year is given to Kanakkoor R Sureshkumar for his short stories. Sureshkumar is employed with Nuclear Energy Corporation as an industrial security officer. He has received several awards in the past. VTG Award carries Rs.3,333 and it will be presented to him on March 4 at 6 pm by litterateur C

Radhakrishnan in Kerala Bhavanam Matunga. The jury consisted of C Radhakrishnan, K P Ramanunni and Prof P M Vasudevan.

V T Gopalakrishnan was employed as a scientist in Atomic Energy Commission and was the founder of Sahityavedi, critic, columnist and a cultural activist and his family instituted this award to perpetuate his memory.



LIC GATEWAY LitFest

■ The LIC Gateway LitFest, the largest platform for leading writers in Indian languages, was held from 22 to 24 of February 2018 at the NCPA, Mumbai with the central theme of 'women power of Indian literature'.

Over 50 renowned and upcoming women writers from over 17 languages, apart from another 20 top names in the literature and film fields attended the festival.

The event, the first-of-the kind national platform to celebrate regional language writings, was organised jointly by Mumbai-based Malayalam publication Kaakka and communication consultancy Passion4communication (P4C).

Well-known authors writing in Assamese, Ahirani, Bengali, Bhojpuri, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Khasi, Kashmiri, Konkani, Kosali, Malayalam, Marathi, Manipuri, Mythili, Odiya, Punjabi, Sindhi, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil attended the three-day literary jamboree.

As part of the central theme, an exclusive session was held for the seven young women authors who were among the Yuva Puraskar award winners by the Sahitya Akademy in 2017. Sessions on the new crop of women writers in English, autobiographical and bold writings by women, marginalized streams and translations was also held. Inanpith winner Pratibha Ray (Odiya), film-maker Aparna Sen (Bengali), Anju Makhija (English), Devika J (Malayalam), Indu Menon (Malayalam), Kanaka Ha Ma (Kannada), Karthika VK (Tamil), Nirupama Dutt (Punjabi), Patricia



Subodh with Yuva Puraskar Winners



Prasannarajan Session

Mukhim (Meghalaya), Pradnya Pawar (Marathi), Prof. Challapalli Swaroopa Rani (Telugu), Tarannum Riyaz (Urdu), were among those women writers gathered.

The festival advisors namely celebrated film-maker Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Bengali writer Subodh Sarkar, veteran Gujarati poet Sitamshu Yashachandra, Gujarati writer Sachin

Ketkar, and Open Magazine Editor S Prasannarajan were also present at the fest leading the discussions.

Books exhibition, poetry readings, networking events, play Aaydan by Sushama Deshpande added sheen to the event that also discussed different trends in translation, reading habits, evolution of languages and involvement of women in theatre, among other topics.



Adv Padma Divakaran with Dr PV Gangadharan Cancer Specialist and Narayanan Potti, Secretary of Cochin Cancer Society who came for a free Cancer Seminar at Mira Road and Chembur.



Smt Karthyayani G Menon, Head of Jehangir Art Gallery welcoming Amitabh Bachchan when the latter visited the Art Gallery during a photo exhibition held there recently.

Dance Arangettam

■ Bharatanatyam Arangettam of Hridaya Sharad, daughter of Sharad M K was held at Cherpu Peruvanam Mahadeva Temple during Mahashivaratri utsavam on two days. Hridaya, Bharatanatyam student of Guru Pavitra Bhatt (Pavitra Arts & Visuals), Mumbai, performed her arangettam on the first day. She is a kathakali student of Kalamandalam C Gopalakrishnan, (Kalaksetram Dombivili) and performed her Purappad (Kathakali arangettam) on the second day. This was followed by *Kiradam*, kathakali programme produced by Kalakshetram.



Kathakali Purappad of Hridaya



Bharatanatyam Arangettam of Hridaya



Sanpada's C K Subramaniam has been honoured as a freelance writer for all his work on sports and cultural activities in the satellite city in the last 7 years, starting with Millennium of the year award in 2012. He got his life time achievement award in 2017 from Navi Mumbai Tamil Sangam and now Parameswaran Kalalaya Foundation honoured him in January 2018 for his meritorious work in art and culture.

SADBHAVANA YATRA

A SOLACE TO UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

Sadbhavana Yatra was conducted by Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti on February 3, in connection with the 17th Pratishtha day celebrations of Gurudevagiri and the theerthadanam followed by ghoshayathra at Nerul. It was conducted to carry the flag to be used in the Ghoshayathra. Sree Narayana Guru, a karma yogi, through the implementation of Advaita into practice could effectively change a caste ridden society into a modern society living in communal harmony and brotherhood.

To mark the essence of the holy teachings of Sree Narayana Guru, the Sadbhavana Yatra was flagged off at Tarapur Atma Shakti Gurumandiram by renowned social activist and Secretary of All India Malayalee Association N A Khalid. Advocate Padma Divakaran handed over the flag to Khalid in the presence of many people from all walks of life. Sadbhavana Yatra was led by N Satiapalan and Beena Satiapalan, ardent devotees of Sree Narayana Guru.

M K Soman, A K Venugopal both Zonal Secretaries of SNMS and leaders of cultural associations in Tarapur and Boisar participated in the yatra.

On the way from Tarapur to Nerul, the Sadbhavana Yatra was welcomed and felicitated by many organizations. In Boisar at Ayyappa Temple the management of Ayyappa Temple, Panchajanya Kala Samskarika Society, Akka group gave a grand welcome to



the Yatra. In the meeting Khalid TA said that in our secular democratic country communal harmony and peaceful co-existence is essential. In Palghar, Ayyappa Pooja Mandal and in Virar, Virar Malayalee Samajam, Virar Ayyappa Bhakta Mandal, Muthappan Seva Samiti and other organizations gave a warm welcome. In Mira Road, various organizations welcomed Sadbhavana Yatra.

Sadbhavana Yatra was successful in conveying the message of Sree Narayana Guru throughout the 300 kms

covering the interior villages of the district of Palghar, Thane and Raigad. The decorated chariot was mounted with the photo of Guru, exhibiting his teachings in Marathi, Hindi and English. The effort was to reach the people's heart with compassion and universal brotherhood. Sadbhavana Yatra reached Nerul with grace and was received by the International Study Centre Gurudevagiri in the midst of chants of Guru by 9 pm on February 3.

*A K Venugopal, Zonal Secretary
Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti.*

Inauguration of Music Troupe

■ The inauguration of a new musical troupe formed by Vishranthwadi Malayalee Association, Pune was held at Gagangiri Mangal Karyalay, Dhanori Road, Vishranthwadi by Association President A S Hamza. Many prominent members of various Malayalee Associations of Pune were also present during the occasion. This was followed by a musical evening.



Curtain falls for Anthappan

Anthappan Pullan dedicated more than three fourth of his life for the stage. He was an actor as well as a director of stage plays. Besides, he was also the founder of Adam Theatres. He migrated to Mumbai when he was only 20 looking for a livelihood. His father Abraham Pullan was a teacher as well as a writer of plays and this trait followed Anthappan also. His maiden play brought him the best actor award when he was a student of Std X. He was initially employed in Century Mills and later he shifted to Tata Mills. Then he renewed his links with the stage when he played a role in *Pingaami* staged Experimental Theatres for Kerala Catholic League under the direction of Nanappan. He became a permanent fixture in Mumbai Stage in 1955 with '*Oraalkooti Kallanaayi*' (One more person became a thief). He soon became a giant among the drama artists and hardly anything escaped his notice when he was involved with a play.

Anthappan discovered several artists from Mumbai and suburbs. Varghese, Augustine, Pavithran Kannapuram, Balaji, Babu Vizhinjam, Kochuraju, Satheesan, Ouseppachan, Mary Paul, Vijayalakshmi, Ramani Menon, Valsala Balakrishnan et al are among them. Anthappan turned to direction with '*Bhoomiyile Malakha*' of C L Jose when



it was presented for Kerala Catholic Union. When Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana conducted a drama festival in 1963, his '*Kurukshetram*' produced by Goregaon Malayali Samajam was adjudged the best play. Anthappan was the best director as well as best actor. Afterwards there was no turning back. He dominated on more than 400 stages during his lifetime. He was presented with more than 50 awards. Thikkurissi Sukumaran Nair the doyen of Malayalam stage and Raj Kapoor the

showman of India are some of the veterans who handed over some of the awards to him.

Anthappan directed more than 60 plays and acted in about 50 of them. Anthappan was very particular about voice modulation, lighting on the stage, the movements of the actors etc and for many actors they were a revelation. Instead of just pointing out the scenes, he had no gumption of enacting each and every scene as a guideline to the actors.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Bollywood influence

Mollywood is mass media, and there is bound to be heavy impact on Malayalis. The influence of movies is bidirectional. Kerala society is reflected in movies and in turn movies influence society. There is this thread of reflection in both.

In the past, the influence was very minimum. But now the influence of movies in every sphere of Malayalis' lives is very visible and pronounced so much so that it seems that without the help of Mollywood, Keralites have no vocabulary in which to express their ideas of spiritualism, culture, politics, patriotism, or at a more fundamental level, the idea of any celebration.

In Kerala, Mollywood is everywhere. Lately, it has become deeply influential in every aspect of Kerala. It has become the shorthand and cheap method for a way of living life.

Practically, every celebration in Kerala somehow ends up becoming a Mollywood function. Every function needs a Mollywood star. Media meetings that apparently transform the state with high-decibel dialogues cannot do without a few Mollywood types to represent the youth. Every award show requires dancers from Mollywood to gyrate in synchronicity with movie music. Every wedding scene is a re-imagined movie set. Across the state, parties are becoming popular, no matter what the

purpose may be, and youths dance to film songs and tracks. The Ayyappa pilgrims who walk days on foot have vehicles accompanying them that blare Mollywood bhakti geethams from giant speakers. Talent shows are full of children bumping and grinding to movie songs egged on by beaming proud parents. Christmas carols are cheerfully set to the parody of popular movie songs, both old and new. This slow and steady Mollywoodisation of our lives has taken place unquestioned and unchallenged..

It is worth thinking about the extent to which we have allowed our imaginations to be Mollywoodised. Can we not find new ways of expression that draw from more diverse sources?

Biju Cherian, Vasai Road

THE SACRED 18 STEPS

[Figure '18' has special significance in Hindu tradition. The Mahabharata has 18 chapters, Mahabharata war lasted 18 days, most important Puranas' number 18, Bhagavad Gita has 18 chapters to mention some.]

Dr C N N Nair

The eighteen steps symbolise man's major obstacles which have to be overcome in order to be able to attain self-realisation. These obstacles are:

Steps 1-5: Five senses: (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) ; Steps 6-11: (Known as *Shad Vairies*) - *Kaama* (Desire), *Krodha* (anger) / *Lobha* (Avarice), / *Moha* (Illusory Attachment) / *Mada* (haughtiness) / *Malsarya* (Rivalry) / Steps 12, 13 INNATE; *Dambhu* (Egotism), / *Asooya* (Jealousy), 14, 15, 16: The Trigunas, (Three Gunas) - *Sathwa* / *Rajas* / *Thamas*; 17. *Avidya* Spiritual Ignorance & 18. *Vidya* - Supreme Knowledge of Brahman.

Before stepping on to *Pathinettampadi*, you have to break a coconut at the appointed spot. All burdens of personal ego are discarded and purified and a devotee, thus lightened, can now set foot on the first of these sacred steps.

There were supporting employees standing on either side of the railings, helping the old, disabled devotees in ascending the steps. At each step, we chanted '*Swamiyai Saranam Ayyappa!*' and ascended all eighteen steps. This moment was of a life-time ambition fulfilment!

As you step on the 18th step, you can view the vedic Mahavakya "Tathwamasi" - inscribed in front of the Sreekovil. The literal meaning of this Mahavakya is "That Thou Art" It can be explained in a lucid form: '*That which you have been searching everywhere outside, is, in fact, within you*'. This Mahavakya is prominently displayed in the *Valiampalam* at Erumeli also.

[These steps are of 9" wide and high and are 5 feet long. Formerly carved on a single stone, these steps were later covered with '*panchaloha*' - [an alloy of five metals- gold, copper, silver, iron and lead.] plates and installed in November 1985.]

We were led into the front queue around 8.30 pm. In the divine presence, the coconut with ghee '*Neythenga*' the most important item of offering was



broke open and the ghee within transferred to the vessel we had brought. This and other pooja items were then handed over to the priest in the 'sanctum sanctorum' who, after offering to the deity, returned them as '*Prasaadams*'. I got '*prasadam*' from the chief priest himself- a rare privilege!

We returned to the rest-house for participating the evening '*Annadaanam*' from temple. It was a universal item called '*Kanji*' rice porridge along with some *daal* - *baaji* and (gooseberry) pickle. It was satisfying, tasty and refreshing.

'Harivaraasanam'

The evening '*darshan*' would continue to last till 10.00 pm. The doors of the '*sanctum sanctorum*' would then be closed. The final item of pooja of the day before closing is singing of a lullaby known as '*Harivaraasanam*' a prayer song with eight segments sung, symbolically, to put the Lord to sleep with love and reverence. Since the last some decades, the '*Harivaraasanam*', masterly sung by the renowned classical

musician K J Yesudas is being relayed to the multitude and on air. The entire devotees surrounding the shrine would then repeat the lullaby along with the prayer record.

I had the great fortune to be in front of the '*sreekovil*' throughout the '*Harivaraasanam*' that evening. By tradition, women are not permitted to be in front of the '*sreekovil*' during this phase. My wife had stayed away, but listening to Yesudas' rendering this devotional masterpiece, in his inimitable melodious divine voice!

At the end of '*Harivaraasanam*', the priests inside the '*Sreekovil*', would retreat one by one, walking backwards and exit. After the final stanza is sung, the head priest '*Melshanti*' prostrates before the idol extinguishes the lamps one by one, and, walking backwards, exit, gently closing the door.

The Lord has entered yogic sleep - Yoga Nidra. Supreme Shaanti prevails!

We returned to our rest room. We had the blissful, contented '*Darsan*' of Lord Ayyappa till eyes and mind were filled with divine spirit! Ajith brought us

prasadam, some 'appams' and 'water' purified by *abhishekam* on the divinity. We have to rise early tomorrow morning by about 3.30am, so as to go for the darsan of Lord in *Abhisheka* mode.

Morning poojas

From early morning hours there is a large queue for the first darsan of the lord. The *sreekovil* opens at *Brahma Muhurtham*. We finished our bath etc. by 4 am and proceeded to the *sannidhanam*. The *melshaanti* arrived in ceremonious style with a number of *upa-poojarees* assistants, all traditionally dressed up.

To the uproarious chanting of "*Swamiyae Saranam Ayyappa!*" from the multitude of devotees awaiting darsan, he opened the door. This followed elaborate rituals *abhishekams* (ablutions) being the first. Ghee, coconut water, ashes etc. were poured over the deity. The Lord was given ceremonial bath, dressed up, garlanded and fed with '*nivedyams*' which were later distributed as '*prasadam*' to the devotees. We both received the prasadam directly from the *Melshanti*, a joyous, rare privilege!

We witnessed these ceremonial rituals and continued with visiting other parts of the temple complex, where installed are the '*Upa-devatas*' *Minor deities*- which is the traditional practice in all temples.

Most important among them is the temple for '*Maalikappurathamma*'

In this *Srikovil*, there is a unique type of offering. Devotees place a coconut in front of the *srikovil* and roll it by hand full around the shrine - *parikramam*.

Pilgrims invariably visit the shrine for '*Vavar Swamy*'. Here the priest offers black-pepper, sugar cubes and ashes as prasadam.

Other smaller shrines are of '*Cheriy Kadutha Swamy*' and '*Valia Kadutha Swamy*', who were chief lieutenants of Lord Ayyappa. [Notice the appellation '*Swamy*' in these cases.]

There is a special enclosure known as "*Manimandapam*"- About this there are two views. One is: This is the place where Ayyappa first appeared after vanishing from the Pandalam Palace. It was later that the idol got re-installed in its present position. Another view is: This place is reserved for the eldest royalty from Pandalam Palace whenever he comes to Sannidhanam to be used as his resting place.

As we are about to leave the shrine we noticed a huge, flaming/smoking pit in front of the shrine from which smoke, and flames emerged. This is the pit in which devotees supplicate the coconuts

with ghee. It is known as *Aazhi*.

Back in the rest house, we had the simple, energising, normal breakfast with steaming Idli and Sambar. They were kind enough to provide coffee without sugar for us, diabetics!

As we were about to return and were standing in front of the guest house, Ajith pointed out to the far away green hills in the east indicating that it is the *Ponnampalamedu* and during the first darsan day of Makarasamkramam, as the *srikovil* opens, a '*Makara Jyoti*' will always appear thrice to the full throated cries of: "*Swamiyae Saranam Ayyappa!*" from the multitudes of devotees!

No amount of thanking was adequate to Chandran my nephew, and his assistant Ajith who made our dream of Ayyappa Darsan such a memorable bliss which would remain etched in our memories forever!

They bid us bye when we were lifted on the dolies.

The descent started

Fulfilled in body and soul, and having had the supreme darsan of Lord Ayyappa, we began descending from Sabarimala. [The '*Dolly vahakars*' later told us that Chandran specifically arranged the same team who had carried CM Pinarayi Vijayan / minister Kadannappalli, just four days back, instructing / ensuring minimum jerks, bumps and shocks! We were tenderly handled. We thanked them sincerely.

At the foot of Pampa Ganapati, where the river gently touches the god's feet and anoints them as it were, we were met by Prasad who was camping there overnight. He led us to the car on the other side of the bridge.

River Pampa keeps flowing gently carrying with her all the external dirt and perhaps internal stains too of the pilgrims who bathe in her yet certainly unaffected by those stains..... Just like the '*Jeevatma*'- the interior dweller within our body is unaffected by the omissions and commissions - - of our physical bodies.

"*Good-Bye, Pampa!*" our hearts murmured!

We were back on 'Earth'!- lightened in body and soul, but overflowing with a sense of fulfilment and achievement!

We drove from Pampa back to Ettumanoor.

An interesting interlude - A Family story

After driving some 2 hours, we halted for a cup of coffee in a location blessed

with nature. There was a small tea shop. We had first tender coconut, then asked for light coffee without sugar [for both of us.] Prasad ordered his preferences. There were *parippuvada*, *sukhiyan*, *bonda* and so on to supplement.

The owner of that small shop a thatched shed with village-style, local roadside shop, '*Chaayakkata*'- looked around 55, a small, energetic man who slowly unburdened himself while we chit-chatted. He opened up his tragic story before us heart-breaking indeed! Oddly, his name was '*Pampaa vaasan*'- a synonym of Lord Ayyappa! He told us he was in Pampa premises doing business and became very rich. He has a six-bed room, two storey building about 200 meters from the shop. But, alas! He is driven out from there by his in-laws, aided by a '*thankless wife*' [his words!] and has now to sleep on the ground in his roadside shop! He has three sons -all well-placed and one daughter. He proudly said: '*They demanded dowry of 61 'pavan' of gold; And I gave them 75!*'. While in Pampa, he used to reach every night and handover purse-full of notes to his wife. Then he made a strange request to my wife: '*Would you please speak to her and tell her that I still love her*'. My wife consented he dialled her and gave phone to my wife.

There was a dialogue, we could hear only what my wife spoke. The result was there was a willingness of that estranged wife to again take the beleaguered Pampavaasan back to the house-hold or so she said! The shop-keeper was grateful - unexpectedly peace returned to his mind! We were delighted too!

We continued our journey.

At Ettumanoor, we had to first go to the temple. Then a coconut is to be broken near the golden flag post. Thereafter, standing in the holy precincts of the site of our *Kettumurukku*, in front of the *srikovil* (shrine), chant loudly three times '*Swamiyae Saranam Ayyappa!*' and then remove the garland of beads which we wore earlier.

Back at home, we were received by the elders and household assembly with a lighted oil lamp - -, as per traditional practice indicating successful return of the pilgrim.

Thereafter, we shared the *prasadam*s [reverently called] brought from Sabarimala to the household and all relatives and friends.

Thus concluded- most satisfyingly- our pilgrimage to the holy Sabarimala Temple by the divine Grace of Lord Ayyappa.

'Swamiyae Saranamayyappa!'

DARK CIRCLES UNDER EYES

Before

After



Dr. (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

Dark circles under the eyes is a common problem. People think that getting dark circles could be due to tiredness, lack of sleep or working hard. But there are different causes for dark circles.

Dark circles form mainly due to thin skin or hyper pigmentation around eyes. There can be puffiness of eyes along with dark circles. Normally the skin around your eyelids and under the eyes (called periorbital skin) is thin (around 0.5mm) compared to the average skin thickness of 2-3mm. This could be the reason of easy formation of puffiness and dark circles around eyes. As we age, our skin loses its elasticity and ability to regenerate making it more thin. Hence dark circles are more seen among elderly people. Periorbital hyperpigmentation (dark colour around eyes) is due to excessive production of melanin by the skin below eyes especially in dark skinned

people.

Causes

1. Heredity: Dark circles around the eyes may be inherited from parents, as dark circles can appear in childhood also
2. Old age: As we get older, we lose some fat and collagens around eyes making the skin thin.
3. Allergies: Nasal allergies can lead to dark circles. Allergies to the cosmetics used for make-up like eye liner, mascara, eye shadow and even concealer can cause itching and constant rubbing leading to dark circles.



4. Sleep Problems: commonest cause of dark circles is sleep deprivation. But oversleeping can also cause dark circles.

5. Eczema and other skin diseases around eyes and face.

6. Stress

7. Deficiency of Iron in body

8. Minor trauma to eyes causing black eye.

9. Skin pigmentation abnormalities

10. Life style: Bad habits like excessive smoking, drinking and even too much of coffee intake can cause dark circles. Users of cocaine or amphetamine drugs may have difficulty in getting enough sleep.

11. Fluid retention can cause puffy eyes and dark circles.

Causes can be weight gain, pregnancy, excessive salt in the diet, fluctuating hormone levels with menstrual cycles or ageing, medicines causing fluid retention, changes in weather (hot or humid weather) and chronic (longterm) disease causing water retention like heart diseases, kidney diseases and thyroid diseases.

12. Excessive exposure to sun: if your skin is exposed to too

much of sunlight for a long time, skin produces more melanin. So sun damage can aggravate the appearance of crow's feet and dark circles around eyes. Use sunglasses with good UV protection when you go out in sun.

13. Working with computers for a longtime: looking at computer or laptop screen for a long time can lead to vision problems as well as dark circles. So it is better to take small breaks like 30 seconds every hour to look away or close your eyes to give rest to the eyes.

14. Your sleeping position: if you're sleeping position is lying on your side or belly, then your face will fold into pillow and put strain around your eyes. Sleeping with an extra pillow deviating your head may help to reduce puffy eyes.

Things to remember

1. Avoid rubbing eyes: skin under the eyes is thin; as you age the skin loses its elasticity and collagen. So don't rub your eyes.

2. Allergies: Nasal allergies and allergies to cosmetics or any type of allergies can cause itchy and watery eyes. Then you tend to rub the skin increasing puffiness around eyes and later dark circles. So treat your allergies as and when they occur.

3. As mentioned earlier, your sleeping position could be a cause of puffy eyes or dark circles. So try sleeping on your back.

4. Gently remove your eye makeup. Don't leave your makeup overnight. It can lead to irritation of skin and rubbing again making the dark circles worse. Don't scrub and remove the make up around the eyes. Use a gentle eye makeup remover. Also use a good moisturizer before makeup.

5. Stop alcohol intake and smoking

6. Reduce indoor air pollution and going out in polluted areas. Air pollution is an eye irritant.

7. Reduce excessive exposure to sunlight. Wear good quality sunglasses with good UV absorption for eye protection especially when you go out in sun. Choose larger lenses that wrap around and protect the skin along the sides of eyes.

8. If you have dark circles and puffiness around eyes, don't neglect it. Consult a doctor. It may be a symptom of variety of conditions like liver diseases hypothyroidism etc. ■

POEM



Anandavalli
Chandran

A dark night, thereafter

It was a dark night
The moon may take time, yet,
The onset of chilled winter.
The little girl couldn't eat and forget either
The eventful day, thence slept,
Late, heavily till the sun's bright
Rays, peeped
And laid gently on her bed.

Woke up, jumping out
Of the bed, looked at
Her right hand to have a glance
At the glass bangles
That she had bought at a fair;
Sobbed, she, 'cos she couldn't find her
Two bangles that her dearest boy friend
Had just slipped into her hand.

Searched for the bangles under her pillow;
Seeing the broken pieces hollow,
She grieved in pain.
Dressed up soon
And ran to the school, holding breath,
To meet her close friend, at length.

On meeting her friend
On the way, she caught his hand
Tightly and wept and wept.;
The sudden sparkles in their eyes
Send the first love rays
To each one's heart;
Consoled he " the tiny bubbles broke
While real love struck".
Pressed her head on his chest, the lad
And the girl, aged twelve each, moved.

HABITS WHICH CAN DAMAGE KIDNEYS

Dr. (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

Kidneys are most essential for our life. Our kidneys produce urine, filter blood, produce hormones, absorb minerals and help to maintain a healthy acid alkaline balance in our body. We must look after our kidneys for leading a healthy life. Some habits can cause damage to kidneys. When symptoms develop, patient report to the doctor and the disease is detected, it may be too late. The patient may die if he is in the advanced stage of kidney failure.

14 March is observed as 'World Kidney Day' all over the world to create awareness among people about kidney diseases.

Let us know about some habits which can damage our kidneys:

Not drinking enough water

Adequate intake of water is essential for the proper functioning of kidneys. National Kidney Foundation suggests that we must drink at least 12 glasses of water per day. If we don't enough water, it can affect the Kidney function and toxins start accumulating in blood.

Not emptying Bladder

You must answer the call of nature and go to toilet when you feel like urinating. Most of the time people especially women postpone urination due to lack of adequate washroom facilities. Retaining urine for a long time in bladder is not good for health. Controlling the urge and retention of urine can lead to incontinence of urine,

urinary infection or renal failure.

Consuming too much of salt

Salt is important for body but too much of salt is bad for health. Over consumption of salt can increase your blood pressure and put too much of strain on the kidneys. So don't add extra salt to your meals or eat too much of pickles, pappad and tinned items with salt as preservative.

Consuming too much Caffeine

If we take too much of caffeine in the form of coffee and soft drinks like cola, it can affect kidneys.

Smoking

Smoking is a bad habit which is harmful to our health. It can lead to narrowing and hardening of blood vessels which can affect the blood supply to vital organs like kidneys. It can gradually decrease the kidney function.

Lack of Exercise

Doing regular exercises and maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the chances of Kidney stones.

Taking too much painkillers

Taking too much painkiller drugs in a high dose or for a long time can damage kidneys. So don't buy painkiller drugs over the counter and take them on your own. It is always advisable to take medicines especially painkillers as per doctor's advice only.

Missing Medicines

You should not miss your prescribed

medicines for type 2 diabetes or hypertension. If you have these types of diseases, your kidneys can get damaged if not treated.

Too much Protein

Taking too much of protein in your diet can damage your kidneys. Remember this if you are on a weight loss programme and consume too much of protein powder or protein milk shake.

Not treating infections

When you fall sick and get infections on any part of your body, you must consult the doctor and take prescribed medicines as per the dose and duration. Infections can also damage kidneys.

Magnesium deficiency

If you don't get enough magnesium through your diet, calcium cannot get properly absorbed. It can result in calcium overload and formation of kidney stones. Try to include green leafy vegetables, beans seeds, nuts and fruits like avocado in your diet, which are good source of magnesium.

Vitamin B6 deficiency

A healthy diet is important for kidney function. Deficiency of vitamin B6 can increase your risk of kidney stones. Rich source of vitamin B6 are fish, chickpeas, beef liver, potatoes, starchy vegetables and non-citrus fruits.

Take care of the above factors and look after your kidneys. If you get any symptoms, consult a doctor as soon as possible. ■

HYPNOTIC REGRESSION THERAPY - AN ADJUVANT IN ADDICTION TREATMENT- OUR EXPERIENCE



Dr Sujatha Nair

■ A person who has an addictive personality is somebody who is very sensitive and finds it very difficult to process and manage his/her emotions. There is almost as if an inability to do so. An inability to identify, express and deal with emotions. In such a person there can be incidents pushed back into the subconscious by suppressions and repressions of incidents that have proved to be painful but the emotions of which linger on. There can be displacements of and projections of these emotions.

The aim of residential treatment for those afflicted by addiction to alcohol and drugs is to provide tools to deal with emotions. The past unresolved issues are looked into, made aware of and aided in dealing with. The environs provided for this is accepting, non judgmental, compassionate and loving. The various processes like counseling, meditations and writing. The writing in a technique that enables the mind to separate the emotions from the incidents making one capable of looking at incidents realistically. All the processes enable the suppressed and repressed incidents to surface be dealt with.

However there can be several

instances that the person does not want to face and deal with or has forgotten it in the subconscious dredges. Every issue left unresolved is a window left open for an emotional upheaval which if not dealt with correctly is a window open for a slip or relapse.

In such situations we have found Regression therapy under the able guidance of a trained and experience therapist to be most helpful. In clinical hypnosis, the person's conscious mind is present and aware of all that is happening. It is a myth that under hypnosis the person undergoing the process is under the control of the hypnotherapist.

Our experience

The clients who have gone through regression therapy have been able to consciously look at incidents that were painful and they did not want to deal with - like death of a parent- grief that they were holding on to, deep rooted resentments held, abuse, relationship issues, phobias, fears. The conscious mind sees all these suppressed and repressed incidents like a third person. At times past lives are seen experiencing which, a deeper understanding of the current life surfaces. There can be physical pain or numbness that can be experienced in different parts of the body during the session depending on what emotions are being held on to. The accepting

and safe environs enables sharing with the therapist that aids in the releasing, healing and letting go process.

After the therapy sessions, of which we recommend minimum three, every client has experienced a shift in internal energies, a sense of relief, lightness and peace. Childhood phobias have disappeared overnight.

In the counseling sessions following the therapy, the clients have been willing then to face issues they were evading and avoiding, share them and deal with them openly with the counselor.

We have seen great results in relapse prone individuals where it was very difficult for them to be willing with to deal with issues.

Regression therapy should be avoided for those suffering from mental health ailments like psychosis, schizophrenia, clinical depression etc. as it can aggravate their conditions.

Thus alternate healing processes in concordance with counseling and meditation enable the clients to get beyond their mind towards recovering and healing in the truest sense. ■

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A wink that sinks

It will take years of hard work to get oneself familiar to the people on the road. However, it took a just a wink to rocket her to fame and celebrity status.

Priya Prakash Varier of Thrissur was brought up in Mumbai till she reached LKG and then rerooted to Thrissur. The eighteen year old is now a student of I year Commerce in Vimala College. Quite early she was attracted to the modelling and acting. She modelled for some products as well as acted in a few short films. When she was auditioned for the role in the recently announced film 'Oru Adaaru Love' she was selected for the female lead. The film has the romantic atmosphere in a campus and as such would go well with the young audience. Neither she nor anyone associated with that film should have dreamt of a situation wherein a song from the film would propel her and her costars to the heavens.

Controversy is now the king of marketing. If one is involved in a controversy and comes out of it unscathed without much ado, popularity is certainly bound to follow. In this particular case, a wink that Priya shot at her boy friend rocketed her to the cosmic world. In just three days nearly three



Winking Priya



Firing Kiss

million people expressed their 'like' on YouTube. It never happened earlier. So far so good!

The song initially did not create any wave. It was shown as being sung by a singer on stage and the young audience were shown enjoying it. Then a girl and a boy much away from her are communicating through gestures. Then the girl winks at the boy first and sends a flying kiss to him. This action created a new magnetic atmosphere in the auditorium. The scene created a euphoria among the public and the song became a hit.

The lyric of the song was written by Puthiya Veetil Mohammad Abdul Jabbar

in 1978 when he was working in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. He sent the lyric to K Rafiq of Thalassery for composing music. It soon became a hit then but the author was not known to the public. Rafiq started singing this song on wedding eves in Muslim households and in 1988, Eranjoli Moosa recorded it on a record player with the assistance of Sibila Sadanandan. Soon it was made available in the form of cassette and it became a hit among Muslims.

There was no ulterior motive in adopting this song in the movie. Vineet was chosen to render the song. When it was posted, there was no hint that it would steal the show but the youngsters embraced it as never before. It was loved everywhere in India and abroad. Some enquisitive Andhra music lovers wanted to translate and then they realised that it was written about the prophet and his wife Khadeeja. Anything that uses the names of prophet was not to be accepted, they were tutored. They lodged a complaint in Hyderabad against using the song since it was the song that was objectionable. However the police did not file an FIR. When the wave of song reached Aurangabad, people there wanted the actors also to be charged for blasphemy and an FIR was filed.

Whenever someone files a case against a movie citing that it hurt their religious sentiments, it become a religious issue. It was never felt that the matter ever hurt people's sentiments. It becomes an issue for newspapers and channels and once the storm is settled, the movie becomes a super hit as it has already captured the attention of the public and everyone is eager to have a look at the movie. Last month's Padmavat is a glaring example.

We reproduce a transliterated copy of the lyric. You decide if it is really blasphemous. ■



PMA Jabbar



Eranjoli Moosa



Thalasseri K Rafiq



Vineet Sreenivasan

MANIKYA MALARAYA POOVI

Manikya malaraaya poovi mahatiyaam khadeeja Beevi
Makkaahyenna punyanaattil vilasitum naaree..ee... vilasitum naaree..ee..
Manikya malaraaya poovi mahatiyaam Khadeeja Beevi
Makkaahyenna punyanaattil vilasitum naaree..ee... vilasitum naaree..ee..
Khaathimun Nabiye vilichu Kachchavatathinnayachu
Kanta neram khalbinullil moham uthichu..uu..
Moham uthichu..haaaa..haaa..
Kachavatavum kazhinju Muthu razool ulla vannu
Kalyaanalochanakkaai Beevi thuninju..uu.. Beevi thuninju..uu..
Manikya malaraya poovi Mahatiyam khadheeja beevi
Makkaah yenna punya naattil Vilasidunnoree..ee... vilasidunnoree..ee..
One doubt! How come the song by Yousufali Kecheri
കരളിൽ വിരിഞ്ഞ റോജാ മലരണു നീ ഖദീജാ
escaped the attention of religious fundamentalist in 1967?



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