

Creating a climate of
'Ease of Living'

Back to school
with confidence

A world without hunger
is not impossible

KERALA CALLING

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OCTOBER 01, 2021_VOL 41_NO.12



**Back to
SCHOOL**



The students from the primary section were in agony as they are not able to meet their friends and connections with the outer world are curtailed now. By reopening the schools, the students can pursue their academics in a much better way

Athira Mohan

Teacher, Government UP School,
Ayyarkulangara

Like all other students, I am also very happy that schools are reopening. I am eagerly waiting for new pair of dresses and bags to meet my friends and to study with them. Everybody should strictly follow the COVID protocols, wear a mask, and should maintain social distance. Best wishes to everyone.



Devaraj K.V.

Standard 3, GVHS, Madikai,
Mekkattu



I wish to sit in the classroom filled with the fragrance of chalk powder. I feel now that it is just an extended summer vacation. I can't resist my wish to meet and play with my friends.

Sreebhadra

Standard 7, Government VHSS,
Kallara, Thiruvananthapuram



I am happy that schools are reopening. Teachers taking live classes will be more effective and advantageous. Interacting with friends will help to reduce stress. I will strictly follow the COVID protocols while going to school.

Abhinand K.

Standard 10, Jamaath School
Vaduthala, Alappuzha

I am glad that schools are reopening after the COVID pandemic. It will be good to meet teachers and friends again. Attending school classes is much better than the online classes. While in school, we can participate in competitions also.



Diya Dhanesh

Standard 4, Government UP
School, Annamada



I have some concerns about the SSLC exam. By sitting in front of teachers and by attending live classes we will be more confident to attend the exams.

Shreya Anil Kumar

St. Augustine's HSS, Aroor



I am excited to hear that schools are opening. It will be a happy moment to meet teachers and friends. I have stories of more than one year to share with them. Expressing my gratitude to the government and education minister as they decided to open the school.

Saranjeeth

Standard 8, Government Higher Secondary School, Manathala

Back to School

Back to school with confidence



For a highly literate state like Kerala, that places a great premium on education, COVID-19 was a tragedy like none other. As schools and colleges closed, and children were forced to confine themselves indoors, the state had to quickly reinvent its educational culture, ramp up its digital infrastructure, upscale its teachers' technology skills, and provide the required fare to students so that they could emerge out of the pandemic, none the worse for wear. And, in all fairness, it must be admitted that the government has done a great job in ensuring the physical and educational well being as well as progress of the children.

Although the threat of the pandemic has not disappeared fully, the government recognizes that it is time to take steps towards normal life, with all precautions and safeguards in place. So, come November 1, all the schools of

Kerala will open their doors once again to welcome children to the vistas of unrestricted knowledge albeit within a slightly restricted social framework. The articles by the Health Minister Veena George "When the Bell Rings Again" and the General Education Minister V. Sivankutty "Back to School with Confidence" mention the details of the protocol that will be strictly enforced and followed to ensure children are safe in their "bio bubbles" as they study and interact with one another.

Another major achievement that comes as a relief to Kerala in these hard times is the tremendous success of the Kerala Administrative Service project, a dream that has come to fruition after six long decades. The exams were conducted by the PSC in an exemplary fashion, and, despite all the obstacles created by the pandemic, the results were published in record time. The advice memos are ready to be dispatched by

November 1.

With Information Kerala Mission, it has been business as usual with greater focus on reaching goals and delivering services at the grassroots level, by exploiting the latest digital technology. Quick and effective delivery of government services to the common folk has become hassle-free. This represents another laudable step towards bringing the culture of accountability and transparency into government offices.

This issue of *Kerala Calling* gives you all these features of the latest profile of the state, including some interesting glimpses into the state's towering personalities like Swati Thirunal, even as it mourns the untimely passing on of some of its greatest artistes; Nedumudi Venu, V.M.Kutty, VK.Sasidharan and Cartoonist Yesudasan

S.Harikishore I.A.S
Editor



This Issue

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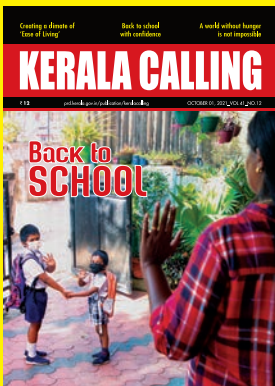
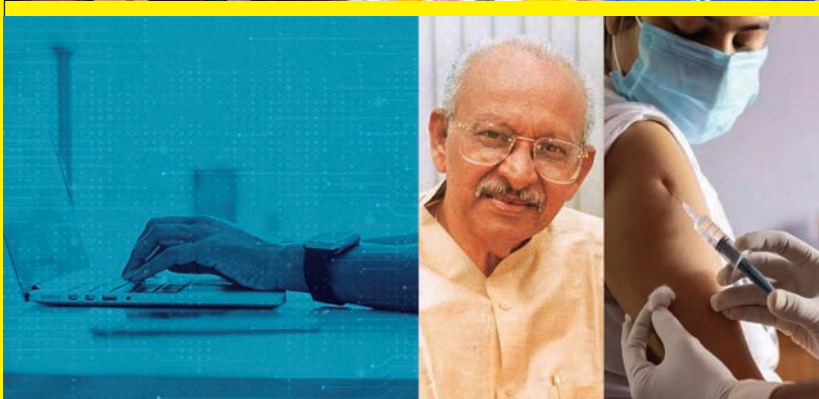
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Creating a climate of 'Ease of Living'

Pinarayi Vijayan
Chief Minister



With the implementation of KAS& citizen centric services, there will be a paradigm shift in the way government services are delivered to the people in the State.



The Kerala Administrative Service (KAS) has come to fruition after a long wait of six decades. The first-ever rank list was published on 8 October 2021. A total of 553 candidates have been included in the rank lists for all three streams with 168 candidates in Stream I, 183 in Stream II and 182 in Stream III. The rank list will be valid for one year. Advice memos for the 105 vacancies reported so far will be issued on 1 November 2021. 35 candidates from each stream will be appointed.

To fulfil the promise of giving Kerala its own Administrative Service, the Left Democratic Front had to overcome many hurdles. The major objective of the formation of an administrative system in the state similar to the Indian Administrative Service is to

The major objective of the formation of an administrative system in the state similar to the Indian Administrative Service is to improve the efficiency and quality of service of the administration.

improve the efficiency and quality of service of the administration. KAS has unveiled the opportunity to take in talented and socially committed youth to the state administration, thereby bringing in their skills and knowledge to improve the quality of public services in Kerala.

However, initially, there was some opposition to the KAS. It created a situation in which the government had to prevail over both political and legal obstacles to realise it. Eventually, the determination and clarity of the LDF government shone through, resulting in KAS becoming a reality after overcoming all its hurdles.

The idea of a state civil service was first mooted in 1957 by the Administrative Reforms Commission chaired by Kerala's first Chief Minister, EMS Namboodiripad. The commissions headed by M K Vellodi and E K Nayanar also resubmitted the proposal but only the Left Governments took a favourable approach in this regard. Finally, over sixty years later, KAS has been formed under the Left Democratic Front Government.

The government found a fair solution to the grievances, especially of those who are already in the service. In addition to direct appointments, Gazetted Officers too have been ensured the opportunity to become part of KAS. Reservation has been ensured in all three streams. Four per cent is being set aside for the differently-abled. Compulsory 30 marks for Malayalam or minority languages in the preliminary examination is in line with the LDF Government's policy of using the mother tongue as the official language. There is also an option for writing answers in Malayalam.

It is a matter of pride that PSC has been able to conduct the examinations in the best manner possible, despite the COVID crisis, and announce the results without much delay. Concerns

It is a matter of pride that PSC has been able to conduct the examinations in the best manner possible, despite the COVID crisis, and announce the results without much delay.



'Vidyakiranam' Project Inauguration

were high when the Kerala PSC undertook the task of conducting examinations similar to the Civil Services Examination conducted by the UPSC at the All India level. However, the KPSC, with its long track record, made it possible in such a short period. The PSC worked on a wartime basis to prepare 1534 examination centres for about four lakh candidates and to complete other preparations. There were no complaints from any corner about the examination. Everyone has agreed that the structure of the examination and the high standard of the questions were in line with the excellence expected from the civil service.

It should be noted that in selecting

On October 1, 2021, we announced a series of measures that made available a variety of services in a single app to the citizens. And on October 4, 2021, we have made the issuance of certificates free of cost

the first batch of the Kerala Administrative Service, the State Government and the PSC have consistently been vigilant to detect and avoid malpractices. The government took stern action against government officials who were running the PSC examination training centres and taking classes. The PSC vigilance itself has taken effective action on the irregularities found.

Constitutionally, the Union and the state governments are obliged to provide various services to the citizens. And Kerala has been a role model with regard to welfare policies. But we feel that no amount of achievement is good enough to make us rest on our laurels. We need to move forward to the goal of 'Citizen First'. Howsoever large the network of welfare measures be, the mode of delivery of services is very important. A democratic state is one that serves its citizenry. The state has to reach out to the citizen and deliver her/his rights.

On October 1, 2021, we announced

a series of measures that made available a variety of services in a single app to the citizens. And on October 4, 2021, we have made the issuance of certificates free of cost. We have also done away with the need for many certificates like Residence, Identity, One and the Same, Relationship, Caste and Inter Caste Marriage certificates, if necessary authentic evidence is available with the citizen.

Time and energy of the citizen shall not be spent waiting before

Time and energy of the citizen shall not be spent waiting before government authorities for the issue of certificates. Most services will come to the citizen without having to apply and obtain specific documents for each service. Through this reform, the State Government aims to create a climate of 'Ease of Living' for the people.



Presenting 'Kite Victers Plus' Logo

government authorities for the issue of certificates. Most services will come to the citizen without having to apply and obtain specific documents for each service. Through this reform, the State Government aims to create a climate of 'Ease of Living' for the people. We are fulfilling the promise in the Manifesto of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) in the 2021 Assembly elections, that citizens having to approach the government authorities for documents, which are more often than not redundant, will be put an end to.

KAS will be a potential game-changer in enhancing the efforts of the Government of Kerala to restructure and revitalise the government services. The state government is determined to make the services more accessible, transparent and efficient. Making all services available online and at citizens' doorstep is a part of that process. Doing away with multiple certificates to avoid

redundancy, thereby utilising the time of government officials more efficiently is also another step in that direction.

Improving the quality of Government services alone would not bring about a radical change in service delivery. It is equally important to improve the quality of those delivering government services. Improving the quality of human resources is paramount. In that regard, KAS will prove to be a paradigm shift, as it will bring more talented youth on board.

To realise our goal of 'Citizen First', there needs to be an attitudinal change in our society and a dedicated effort from all government officials particularly those joining the Kerala Administrative service. They have to take on all challenges and fulfil their duties by upholding the commitment towards the people of Kerala. I hope they would do it without any fail and strive hard to secure a prosperous future

for Kerala. I wish all candidates selected for KAS a bright career ahead and extend the State Government's wholehearted support in completing their duties with perfection.

Democracy is a process in which the responsibility to the people is continuous. The interregnum between the casting of the vote and the next election, cannot be one of disconnect between the government and the people. During the previous tenure, we had initiated the practice of announcing the annual progress of the implementation of electoral promises in our previous tenure and will continue with it.

Now we have announced major steps with regard to service delivery and are making path-breaking intervention with regard to the administrative machinery, to make governance as a whole, citizen-centric. They are in continuation to our constant efforts to deepen the content of democracy, a goal that we are committed to strive for

Back to school with confidence

V. Sivankutty
Minister for General Education

No one alive has ever witnessed anything as devastating as the COVID pandemic. These are tough times we are enduring and despite the innumerable hurdles, we are slowly winning. The past year and a half have been hard on us as humans, individuals and social beings. The most unheard of regulations in human history had to be followed to remain alive and safe. Containing ourselves to our homes, restricting travel and interaction, social distancing and staying away from loved ones, all took a heavy toll on us. It was a fearful time. And then the vaccine came as a beacon of hope for all of us. Vaccinating everyone became the next herculean task. Making the vaccine accessible to all was not easy. The state of Kerala became a role model in vaccination drives as much as it was during the COVID prevention initiatives. Today, we can proudly say that our small state is one of the fastest among accessible vaccine providers in the country. And we are slowly working our way up towards a COVID-free state. The spread of COVID has plummeted considerably in the last couple of months in Kerala. It is in this context that we are considering the reopening of schools.



Children were one among the most affected by the COVID restrictions. The world stood still as the pandemic interrupted the interactive education methods that we had followed to date. But Kerala did not falter. We stepped up to the situation and brought all the necessary changes that would enable our children to continue their education without fail. Classes were broadcast through the Kite-Victers channel, under the Department of General Education, Government of Kerala.

To impart education digitally for the whole state was a daunting task. The unavailability of the tools for communicating digitally was the basic problem. It was our Chief Minister who stepped forward to

resolve this issue. The response we received from our people was overwhelming beyond words. The same state that stood by each other during the floods stood with the children of the state too. Those who were deprived of the tools to communicate and interact were provided with it. The people of our state as a whole proved that it was possible to beat any pandemic if we stood together. They made sure that all our children receive the same facilities for the changed education systems such as televisions and cable connections. There was a multitude of hurdles for digitalizing education but we overcame most of them. A programme called 'Vidyakiranam' was started to ensure that all our



After a long time, schools are going to reopen soon. The classrooms and school compounds have been disinfected and other arrangements to welcome the students are in full swing. Cleaning staff from the corporation, voluntary organizations, PTA and SMC are standing together with us throughout the cleaning process. We have decided to conduct an online PTA meeting to overcome the mental stress and concerns of students regarding the change from online classes to offline classes. A COVID cell has been formed to make sure that COVID protocols are strictly adhered to inside the school campus.

Baby Girija

Principal, T. K. D. M. H. S. S.,
Kadappakada, Kollam

children receive the same benefits. This initiative received a huge array of positive responses from society. To improve the progress, a platform called G- Suit was formed under Kites and Victers and experimented in select academic institutions. This produced more positive results and helped motivate us in the educational journey forward. As we were moving forward to air the classes completely online, the favourable conditions to reopen our school systems have come.

Schools have reopened all over the country. We have their models

and experiences before us to look up to and correct according to our situations and conveniences. It is under this circumstance that we have prepared a guideline manual for the safe and precautionous functioning of schools after reopening. The main guidelines



The cleaning process has been completed with the help of the health department and Kollam corporation. Arrangements will be done to sanitize and inspect the body temperature of the students. All teaching and non-teaching staff have been vaccinated. Classes will be conducted on a shift basis by accompanying 20 students in each class. Only two students will be allowed on each bench. Special counselling classes have been arranged for students and parents.

A.K. Nirmala

Headmistress, Government Model
Girls High School, Kollam

from the manual will be listed here.

“As of now, it has been decided by the government to open schools from the 1st of November, 2021 in complete accordance to all Covid protocols. All classes from 1 to 7 and classes 10 and 12 will begin on November 1st and the rest of the classes from November 15th. The new guideline manual contains guidelines to follow while reopening schools under the current context.



The effect of the COVID pandemic has made changes in the educational sector also. The students were kept inside the house for the online classes. In this context, the government has taken the necessary precautions to reopen the schools. The government has ensured happy and safe academic days for the students. Online classes will be given to the students who are not able to attend the school class.

V.V. Sasi

Headmaster, Government UP
School, Annamanada, Thrissur

A programme called ‘Vidyakiranam’ was started to ensure that all our children receive the same benefits. This initiative received a huge array of positive responses from society. To improve the progress, a platform called G- Suit was formed under Kites and Victers and experimented in select academic institutions. This produced more positive results and helped motivate us in the educational journey forward. As we were moving forward to air the classes completely online, the favourable conditions to reopen our school systems have come.

General instructions:

1. Children must attend school only with the consent of their parents.
2. Students must compulsorily follow the Covid protocols inside and outside classes and on campus.
3. Classes 1 to 7 can have a maximum of two students on a single bench.
4. Divide a class into two and half of the maximum number of children in a class can attend school at a time.
5. Schools can make arrangements to conduct classes beginning between 9 or 10 am, as per their convenience.
6. It would be convenient to arrange classes scheduled until noon for the first two weeks. Saturdays, except public holidays, can be used as working days too.
7. If there are more than 1000 students in campus, classes should be arranged in such a way that only 25% of the total students come to campus at a time.
8. Students of each class can be divided into batches to control the number of students. Such batch adjustments are not mandatory in schools with low enrollment. The head of the school will be in charge of the batch arrangements.
9. The number of students attending school should be determined in accordance with the COVID protocol based on the likelihood of physical conditions.
10. Each batch should be given three consecutive days to attend school (two days in schools with excess students). The next batch will attend for the next three days and so on. A student enrolled in a particular batch must remain in that batch throughout.
11. Regarding the arrangement of batches, decisions can be made after considering parents' opinions. It is advisable to arrange batches in such a way that students from the same area come together for ease of commute.
12. Children with disabilities need not attend school in the first stage.
13. Students with any kind of illness or those in contact with sick members at home need not attend school. Children with symptoms (cough, fever, cold, sore throat or any other COVID related symptom), children/staff with primary contact or those in quarantine or coming from containment or curfew zones are not required to attend school.
14. COVID protocols must be strictly followed if there are covid patients at home.
15. Only well-ventilated classrooms/ halls should be selected for teaching at school.
16. Open spaces must be used for teaching whenever and wherever possible.
17. Parents who come to pick up or drop their children at school should be careful not to enter the school campus or gather in groups.
18. Mid-day meal schemes at schools can be restarted after taking all conditions into account. This should be in accordance with all COVID protocols.
19. The Education Department will give further instructions after evaluating the first two weeks of students attending school, the shift and batch system and midday meal schemes.
20. Model residential schools can be reopened. Though there are instructions for differently-abled children to not attend school in the first stage, special schools for the blind and deaf can be reopened. The guidelines for reopening hostels will be announced later.
21. All teaching and non-teaching staff should be inoculated with two doses of the covid prevention vaccine before the school reopening.
22. School bus drivers and other student transportation drivers should be inoculated with both doses of vaccine.
23. The school authorities will receive directions from DDMA/ district authorities/ health department regarding classes for the locally restricted areas under COVID containment.
24. All school functions or programmes must begin with the COVID protocol reminders to be followed in the school premises. These regulations must be consciously followed, and school authorities must ensure the same.
25. The guidelines for academic activities will be released soon after.
26. A helpline must be established at the school level.



MVLPS, Manthara has completely done the preparatory measures to reopen the classes after the COVID pandemic. All arrangements have been done academically and physically to welcome the students. The school is ready to receive the little ones to the world of letters.

Asok Kumar

Headmaster, MVLPS, Manthara, Edava



The school authorities are conducting video conferences with the students to give awareness regarding the reopening of schools after the covid pandemic. Actions have been taken to clean the school premises with the help of teachers, the NSS volunteers and voluntary organizations. We will ensure the service of health counsellors to the students inside the campus. The teachers have already received two doses of the vaccine.

Lissy P. Joseph

Principal, GHSS, Palakkad



The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the world to a standstill. Economically, socially and psychologically the world stood still. But we all know that life must go on. Schools, the very basic unit for moulding and nurturing the future generation, remained closed for a long period due to the threat of the pandemic. Students were forced to sit down in front of electronic gadgets for education.

The government decision to reopen schools has evoked mixed reactions from parents and teachers. Parents are worried about the physical and emotional repercussions of online learning on children. A machine can never replace human wisdom and relations. As the adage goes, "Only a blind man would understand the blessings of vision", in this context the decision of the government to reopen schools on November 1 after 18 months is really overwhelming for students, parents and teachers.

The children were undergoing stressful life during the lockdown. Moreover, school is a miniature society where students learn the art of socialization. We all are eagerly waiting for the reopening of school. With utmost care and cautiousness, we are here to welcome our blooming buds.

T. Wilson

Principal, GHSS, Omalloor, Pathanamthitta



The health and safety of our children is undoubtedly the most important concern of our government. It is with utmost care that we have set the guidelines and we will ensure that the safety of our children is not compromised in any manner whatsoever. Measures are being carried out at present to cleanse and fumigate schools with the help of local bodies and the public. The meeting with the representatives of teachers and student bodies to discuss the guidelines and queries regarding the reopening of schools has been done and also held meetings with officers of various levels from the Department of General Education. Discussions were also held to enable coordination of various departments.

Schools must only be open with strict adherence to covid protocols. To make this big step a success, we have to coordinate with the local bodies. The representatives of local bodies have promised their full cooperation. The service of a doctor in each school needs to be ensured. There will be assistance from local representatives in this regard as well.

Let's move forward as a unified team to ensure safe education for our children. Let them move on and enjoy healthy school life and leave the loss of the last year behind. Together, we can build a better future for our children ●

When the bells ring again...

Veena George
Minister for Health



All necessary measures have been taken to ensure a healthy learning ambience in the school premises

It has been over a year and a half now that we have started battling one of the biggest pandemics in the history of mankind. As of now, COVID-19 is the sixth most destructive pandemic that has affected humans on such a widespread scale, world over. The entire world came to a standstill.

Lives were disrupted on a massive scale, livelihoods lost, loved ones separated or lost forever. The pandemic forced us to shut down almost everything. Hospitals became the only functioning institution. We had to impose strict measures to safeguard and protect our people. Lockdown did help us a lot in buying time to figure out our safety protocols. But we cannot shut down everything forever. The economy and wellbeing of our people are at stake and we cannot stay stagnant in fear forever. Moving forward with all our courage is a major part of winning a battle. With the people

of Kerala uniting to fight against any disasters, it should be quite easy for us to overcome this too. We are ready to move forward and open the doors of progress. In the context of having vaccinated 93% of our population with the first dose of vaccine, we are slowly and steadily moving forth with lifting restrictions one by one and engaging our people in their day to day routines to bring our lives back to normal. As a part of this venture, we are beginning to open our schools and colleges, step by step, with all necessary precautions and considering the opinions of various experts on the subject.



As the schools are reopening, we had conducted staff meetings and PTA executive meetings to discuss the execution of COVID guidelines issued by the government. We also held meeting with the representatives of political parties, youth organizations, merchants trade union, employment guarantee workers, auto drivers etc, and decided to start a cleaning campaign in a time-bound manner.

Cleaning, disinfecting and clearing of school premises were done with the help of active participation of the public. The teachers and staff have been inoculated with the second dose vaccine. Our school has prepared a detailed plan to reopen the academic sessions by strictly adhering to the COVID guidelines and protocols.

Moli N.

Headmistress, GHSS Aruvikkara, Thiruvananthapuram

Starting from October 4th, we began gradually opening some colleges. The next big task is to reopen our schools. After intensive discussions between the Department of Health and the Department of Education, a guideline manual has been released with the protocols to be followed in the process of reopening schools. Instructions for a safer school environment have been

specified in detail in the guideline manual. Children must be allowed in schools only under the full consent of parents. Classes will be conducted in a bio-bubble model. Each bubble will be specified days to attend schools. Only the ones in a particular bubble will be allowed to attend school on their specified days. The guidelines have been designed to ensure the complete protection of the students, teachers and parents.

Since the reopening includes little children beginning from lower primary classes like class one, the departments of Health and Education have been in constant discussion with all other



The students and teachers are happily welcoming the state government's decision to reopen the school. Due to the pandemic, the free movement of students was restricted and many of them were under stress due to this. As far as the students are concerned, they treasure the value of friendship most. Nothing can beat the freshness of live classroom academic sessions. This will be a happy moment for the differently-abled students also. I believe that schools should be restarted by solving the concerns of parents.

Dr. Bijumon P.S.

Senior HSST, Ernakulam



The decision of the Kerala government to re-open the schools is appropriate and welcoming. Classroom studies are very important factors for catering to the intellectual and mental growth of a student. For shaping a good life perspective and also to share peer friendship among the students, coming to school is inevitable. Cyber friendship and online classes cannot completely replace the quality of classroom studies. Let us join our hands together to build a better young generation by changing the limitations into wonderful opportunities by ensuring the COVID protocols.

Tressa Thomas

Principle, Government Vocational Higher Secondary School, Kumili

concerned departments to ensure the complete protection of our children in these guidelines. We can assure that there has been thorough discussions and research done before taking this big step and that we are fully equipped and prepared. But we also need the wholehearted support of our parents and teachers to make this step a success. School is a foundation based on the strong pillars of students, teachers, parents and management. A combined effort and participation from all the pillars are required to make this work. We can create a strong



The school management committee held meetings to decide about the plans for the reopening of the school. We decided to clean the school surroundings and sterilize the classrooms. The teachers had already received two doses of vaccines. We will take all necessary precautions as per the government guidelines. Facilities such as thermal scanners, sanitisers, gloves will be made available with the help of local self-government institutions and voluntary organizations.

P. Abdul Salam

Headmaster, Government High School, Adimali

barrier against this pandemic if we all stay together, stay strong and make a collective effort. Schools will be able to function effectively if they follow all the guidelines strictly.

Our fight can be made more effective if our teachers remind students of the necessity to follow precautions every now and then. COVID protocols must be a constant reminder in schools. We are fighting an invisible battle with a very strong enemy and our children need to understand that they too are strong fighters in this battle and that they need to stand with us on this. Children are our youngest brightest building



I am welcoming the government's decision to reopen the school by strictly adhering to the COVID protocols. The arrangements to reopen the school and to ensure safe academic sessions for students are in progress. Guidelines and awareness about COVID protocols have been given to the parents and students online. The meetings of the school management committee, PTA and staff council were held to analyze the arrangements so far.

G. Sujatha

Headmistress, Government Model HSS, Kottayam



To make education more effective, the classes should be conducted inside the classrooms. For a better future for the students, I completely welcome the decision of the government to reopen the schools.

Dhanya Jobins

Teacher, CMSHS, Thalavadi, Alappuzha



The cleaning of school premises has been done already. Awareness campaigns about returning to the school by following proper COVID protocols were given to the parents and students online. The final arrangements to schedule classes based on the shift method are under progress. Here teachers and students are eagerly waiting for the opening of school after the COVID pandemic.

V. Sreekala

Headmistress, Government HSSS, Vadavathoor



As the school opens, the long-awaited concerns regarding the education of students come to an end. As far as the students of classes 1 to 7 are concerned, the information's getting from the classrooms are much more important.

K.M. Dijeesh

Teacher, Kannur



The teachers have the responsibilities to give mental support and to ensure the safety of the students. Parents should train the students on how to follow the COVID protocols and obey the health security procedures.

P.C. Annamma

Headmistress, Government Highschool, Pollethai, Alappuzha



After the outbreak of the pandemic, our students are returning to schools after a long time. The happy and cheerful response of students and their willingness to return to school campus makes me more happy and contented. The teaching staff, non-teaching staff, PTA and SSG are working together with me to make proper arrangements to reopen the school. We all are ready to welcome students. We are glad to receive the kids back to school with much love, care and affection by maintaining proper COVID protocol and guidelines.

Vinitha

Principal, Government TTI, Manacaud, Thiruvananthapuram

blocks and every measure they partake in will spread to their families and eventually into the whole society. Awareness is best begun from the youngest of age and there is no better option than our children to start with. We must constantly remind ourselves and our children that loose regulations must not be taken for granted and the most trivial of precautions could save a lot of lives.

What precautions must we take?

- All students, teachers, and non-teaching staff must strictly wear masks while stepping out of their homes. Since the delta variant of COVID-19 is still at large, double masking or using an N-95 will prove more effective. Wear masks that cover the nose and mouth effectively.
- Masks should not be lowered while speaking within schools or while travelling to and from schools.
- Social distancing must be strictly followed in all circumstances. No groups or gatherings will be allowed.
- Do not touch your eyes, mouth and nose should with your bare hands.
- Windows and doors must be kept open at all times in schools as closed spaces contribute to the faster spreading of the virus.
- Students must not share pens, pencils, books, water bottles, food or any other items under any circumstance.
- Wash or sanitise hands with soap and water or sanitiser every now and then.
- No parent, teacher, staff or student who display symptoms of fever, cough, breathing trouble, cold or any such kind or have been in contact with any one of the same must not enter the school premises under any context.
- Those who are on the COVID contact list must strictly remain in their homes.
- One of the heaviest chances of spreading the virus is while eating metres from each other while eating and should not eat in groups. Avoid talking while having food.
- Groups or crowds must be strictly avoided in the washing area. Chances of spreading are heavy in these places too.
- Food waste, masks, gloves, etc should not be discarded carelessly after use. They must be disposed of safely.
- All must wash hands with soap and water or sanitiser after using the toilets.
- It is better to replace the mask with a new one after having food.
- Precautions must be continued after reaching back home too. Clothes and masks worn during the day must not be discarded carelessly in any manner. They must be thoroughly washed with soap and water. Personal hygiene is a must and contact with others should be resumed only after proper bathing and cleaning.
- Any student, teacher or parent having any doubts regarding the guidelines can contact DISHA through 104, 1056, or 0471 2552056.

After intensive discussions between the Department of Health and the Department of Education, a guideline manual has been released with the protocols to be followed in the process of reopening schools ●

A world without hunger is not impossible

G.R. Anil
Minister for Food and Civil Supplies



World Food Day was celebrated this year amidst a long string of endless struggles from all over the world. We are in the middle of a pandemic that no human alive has ever witnessed before. A pandemic that shut the world out from each other and locked us into safety but also from social interaction was new and terrifying at the same time for all of us. We are still in the process of learning to fight the virus, one step at a time. It can be said without doubt that we are indeed progressing. However, the fight keeps getting harder with the increasing climatic disasters on one side that is raining on the progress of the other. Cries of tortured fellow beings from amidst

war zones are echoing around us. Helplessness rings in the air as we despair to keep things running around us. It is in the context of this uncertain future that World Food Day meets us with the central theme of “Our Actions are our Future- Better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life”. More than 150 countries, NGOs, media and civil society have united to raise awareness on the issues surrounding poverty and hunger on this day.

World Food Day is celebrated to mark the founding of the FAO(Food and Agriculture Organization) of the United

Nations every year. The FAO was founded on 16th October 1945. It was the former Hungarian Food and Agriculture minister Dr.Paul, who opined that World Food Day be celebrated on this day from 1979. The day aims at tackling global hunger and striving to eradicate hunger across the world. The themes change every year based on the focus that needs to address the common hunger and poverty issues across the world. The themes have helped spread awareness and bring more people forward in the fight against poverty. The criteria for hunger and the action plans for its elimination have been redefined by the international community. This



is underlined in this year's theme.

Our actions define our future. This is undoubtedly the fact in any scenario. However, the factor that counts most is who stands by us in these actions to define our future. Nutritious food is a right of every human being. This is not an isolated goal. It is a goal that goes hand in hand with the concept of sustainable development. Only a sustainable food and agriculture system can remedy the phenomenon of hunger and achieve this goal. Because the food and agriculture sources are also heavily disrupted due to unnatural production and consumption, as much as the fuel and energy sources.

A profit-hungry world that has encroached on our food resources, agriculture and environment, making it a struggle to eliminate poverty and hunger and threatening survival of the entire human existence, is a political crisis. Mahatma Gandhi was on point decades ago when he said "There is enough for everyone's

need in this world, but not for anyone's greed". Karl Marx once said "This Earth is not a property of any individual, community, society or nation. It is not even a group property of everyone living on it. We are nothing but tenants who are allowed to hand over the Earth to the future generation in a better state than it was given to us". The foresight of these two great thinkers from a time when the survival of the environment and the food and agriculture system were not so weak, is a guiding light for us. Their words remind us over and over again that our actions will determine our future.

The food and agriculture industry offers jobs to over a billion people all over the world. This is a greater economic share when compared to all the other industries. Thousands will lose their jobs from the slightest imbalance in this structure. Millions will be pushed into hunger and poverty. The existing commercially centralised system of food consumption, production and excessive wastage is in turn drastically affecting

our land, environment and climate. Our existence itself is in a vulnerable crisis at this time. Despite all these endless environmental degradations, 3 billion people in the world do not have access to basic nutrition or food. We often see heartbreaking images of little children from the Sub-Saharan countries of the African continent, struck with hunger at an age where they should be healthy and well and playing around. It is not only this fatal raw hunger that imbalances an already unjust system of social order. There is a hunger among the general riches of developed nations, where marginalised groups struggle to survive. As per the 2020 statistics, 194 million Indians suffer from hunger. This is 23% of the world hunger. The paradox of this sad reality is that this hunger is prevailing amidst the same society where there exists an abundance of food wastage and scores of lifestyle diseases caused by unhealthy food habits.

It is in this context that a Global Food Summit was virtually

convened by the United Nations General Assembly on September 23rd. The summit decided that to achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030, effective changes have to be made to the world food order. Representatives from 193 countries participated. As a future measure, the summit put forth five operating plans to put into effect. Accessible safe and nutritious food for all, steps towards sustainable consumption habits, eco-friendly food production, livelihoods based on principles of social justice, development of prevention and immunity against unforeseen disasters and pandemics, are the five operating plans. The summit encouraged governments and other working committees to work towards this mission. We extend the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization our wholehearted support and solidarity in all their rightful ventures forward.

However, it goes without saying that these measures can be effectively enforced only if nations across the world decide to follow in these footsteps. Liberalisation has been gaining strength in the world since the 1990s, limiting the possibilities of the government and their policies for the welfare of the people. Like all other industries, these agendas have drastically affected the food and agriculture sector too. Unable to withstand the rising global market powers, farmers abandon food farming. They are often forced to limit themselves to farming cash crops alone. Subsidies for seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, etc were taken down one by one. Multinational seed companies have gripped the agriculture sector for reaping their own profits. Limitations of the public distribution system

and privatisation of storage warehouses are all part of the bigger plans of private powers. And now, the privatisation of banks have taken away the last ray of hope of any financial support for farmers. Every Indian farmer is literally at war with the central government that has slashed any hopes for promoting agriculture in the country and mercilessly abandoned the hundreds of thousands of farming communities in the country. It should not be forgotten that World Food Day, vowing to protect and nourish the food and agriculture order, is being observed amidst the black days of blood and sacrifice from the fighters and survivors of the very sector. Their cries cannot and should not be ignored. It is an utmost sad irony that we are working towards the upliftment and preservation of the farming community when their blood is spilt on the very same streets. The lesson we learn from this is that campaigns and awareness will not suffice to fulfil and realise the message of this day. A strong political uprising is required to change the anarchic conditions that prevail today.

Amidst these calamities and catastrophic disasters, the small state of Kerala holds the banner of a people's alternative with pride. Despite a heavy and unforeseen pandemic that disrupted every single life, not a soul in Kerala went to sleep on an empty stomach. This Kerala model has its head held high among the failed models around the world. While nations around the world watched their people suffer and die from lack of food, Kerala tied up its dhoti and assured that no one in the state would starve to death and the promise has been kept up till today.

Free food kits for all, 20-rupee meal hotel networks, a transparent public distribution system, food and nutrition kits for students and the direct involvement of the government in the market sector has all added to the expansion of the successful Kerala model during the most struggling times. And the model keeps growing.

As the Global Food Summit rightly said, our actions define our future. And every Keralite can proudly say that with our collective will, we will face any challenge with courage. We did it before and we shall do it again. Let us prove that a world without hunger is not impossible! ●



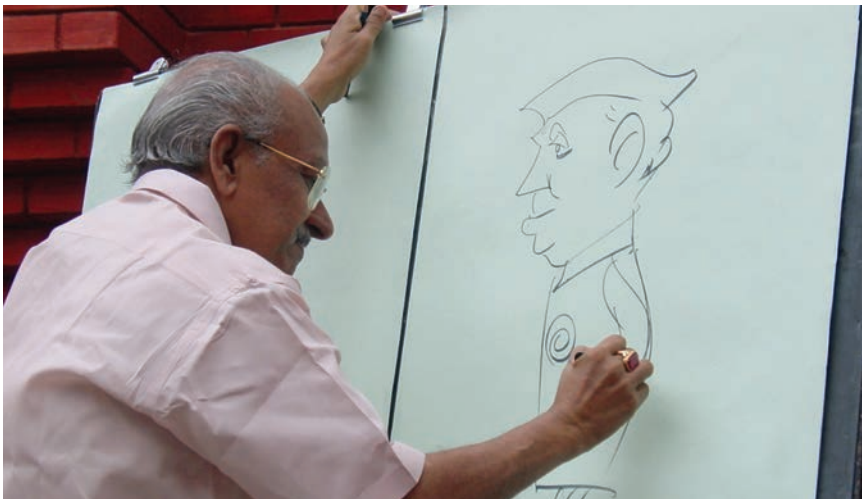
COVID 19 pandemic gave lessons to parents about the importance of public schools and teachers. Online teaching giving temporary satisfaction to students, but actual Psychological and Social gaining will not be achieved in a wider Perspective. On COVID 19 background, we will take much more care about the Preventive measures like SMS (social distance, mask and sanitiser) for a healthy school life. We welcome all students with renewed enthusiasm.

T.K. Rajeev Kumar
Principal, Kulanada Govt. H.S.S.,
Pathanamthitta

Yesudasan : a cartoonist par excellence



Sudheernath
Cartoonist



Intro- Six decades of swerving sketches that criticised political leaders left and right have come to an end. Yesudasan's cartoons will remain a legendary memory from now on.

Yesudasan's father John Mathew was a professional painter and his mother Mariyama was an embroidery artist. His elder siblings were also well-versed in art. Growing up among them, Yesudas was drawn into drawing and painting from a very young age. His cartoons in the daily newspaper, Janayugam, during the liberation struggle (vimochanasamaram) made him a notable figure in the world of cartoonists. His first cartoon came out in the magazine 'Ashoka' in 1955. A failed cartoonist at 'Mukhamukham', he was hired by Janayugam daily as their staff cartoonist. Most of the cartoonists at that time were right wing supporters and Yesudasan's entry in the cartoon world with leftist ideals gave him a successful and fresh start.

He was the first staff cartoonist in the history of Malayalam media and the first of leftist cartoonists

in the field. Discussions with prominent left leaning journalists like Kaambissery Karunakaran, Vaikom Chandrasekharan Nair, R Gopinathan Nair, N Gopinathan Nair, Thengamanam, and Prakasom made his cartoons sharp, interesting and popular among the general public. Yesudasan's cartoons turned out to be witty replies to the ones drawn by cartoonist K S Pillai favouring the liberation movement. While Pillai's box cartoon 'Meluchaar' put forth a strong alliance to the liberation struggles, Yesudasan's 'Kittummaavan' became a direct opponent with its strong stand against the liberation movement. This witty counter fights continued till K S Pillai breathed his last in 1959.

During his time at Janayugam, Yesudasan had the opportunity to work with cartoonist Shankar in Delhi. He worked as Shankar's

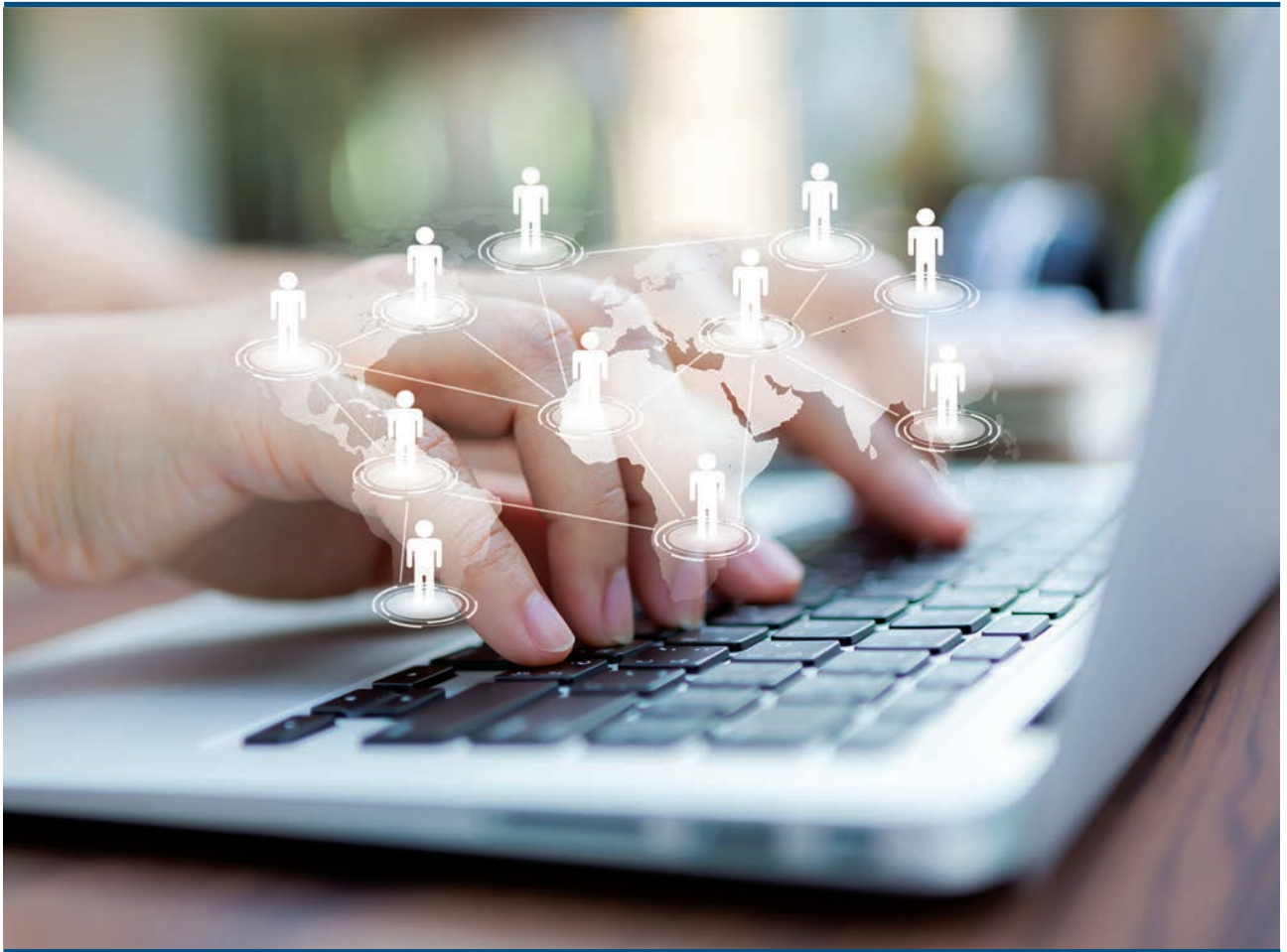
assistant at his weekly for six years. His perspective about the strokes and methods in cartooning grew a lot under Shankar's guidance. Yesudasan always remembered with fondness that he had the best days of his career working with Shankar. It was C Achutha Menon, during his time as an MP at Delhi, who brought Yesudasan back to Janayugam. This time, he was also appointed as the Chief Editor of Janayugam's childrens' magazine, 'Balayugam'. A new publication from Kattaanam called Asaadhu, like Shankar's weekly, paved way for the growth of many young cartoonists in Kerala. When Asaadhu became an independent publication, Yesudasan cut off all ties with Janayugam for his political disparities. The emergency period put a halt to Asaadhu's publication from Kattaanam. After the emergency, it restarted its publication from Ernakulam. Following Asaadhu came the publications Saadhu, Cut Cut and TukTuk, all of which were quite popular but major financial loss. The failed publications forced him to take up a job as staff cartoonist in Malayala Manorama in 1985. Yesudasan's cartoons were imitated by many cartoonists during his career in Manorama.

Yesudasan holds the record for the most number of cartoon columns in the history of Indian cartoons. From the first elected Chief Minister EMS to the present Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Yesudasan etched his mark in the sixty years of Kerala's political turning points through his strokes. No other cartoonist in Kerala's history holds such a record. He was a legend of cartoons and will forever remain a flaming icon in history to be remembered, cherished and followed by all ●

A tale of success



Sruthi S.
Writer



The state of Kerala has had many success stories in the past when it comes to development at the lower rungs of the administration process. Be it public health, education, transport or any other service, the small state of Kerala has held a unique position in maintaining a subtle and balanced relationship between administration and the public. The state and its present government believes in taking forward steps to bring the backward aspects to the forefront. Despite the pandemic, we have managed to execute some excellent initiatives in all sections of governance. And the results are inspiring!

Over the last five years, the scope and role of local governments in Kerala have increased as never before, especially under a leadership that focuses on the development of local governments.

According to the Kerala Development Report 2021, of the 941 gram panchayats in Kerala, 939 gram panchayats, and all block panchayats have achieved international quality certification ISO 9001:2015. The

ISO 9001:2015 is an international certification for quality management systems. The ISO certification is given only if the system is designed such that people receive uninterrupted services and the local bodies provide people-friendly and accurate front-office facilities, a computerised record keeping system that can create records in a very short time, and an orderly office system. The work done by local governments to achieve international certification is a major step towards the goal of providing a quality service to the people and being a people-friendly organisation.

The Information Kerala Mission (IKM), an autonomous institution under Local Self Government Department, Government of Kerala, was setup with a mandate to strengthen the local self-governance through ICT applications or in simpler terms, with the sole objective of computerizing the local bodies. It is the largest and most comprehensive local body computerization initiative in the country, which envisage computerizing and networking the 1209 local self-government institutions in Kerala. It addresses the entire gamut of issues concerning local body governance, decentralized planning, and economic development at local economic development. Institutional activities are being implemented through the departments and divisions such as research and development, software development, testing and quality

Applications for various certificates, including building ownership, BPL, property tax exemption application, RTI application, Ease of Doing certification, licensing and renewal applications and development and project proposals are available on the ILGMS and its Citizen Portal. Currently 213 services are available in the portal.

control, operation and maintenance, IT and web management, remote sensing and GIS, capacity building, human resources, finance, etc.

Over the limited years since its initiation, the IKM has adopted a human-centred approach to e-governance, an approach characterized by holistic and proactive evaluation and integration of existing and legacy systems through citizen-friendly interfaces in local languages (Malayalam, Tamil and Kannada). IKM Methodology places the employees and functionaries at the central stage of this transformation and focuses on their empowerment and capacity building as the mechanism for improving performance. The software applications are developed through active user participation, with emphasis on demystification of technologies and vertical and horizontal integration across products as well.

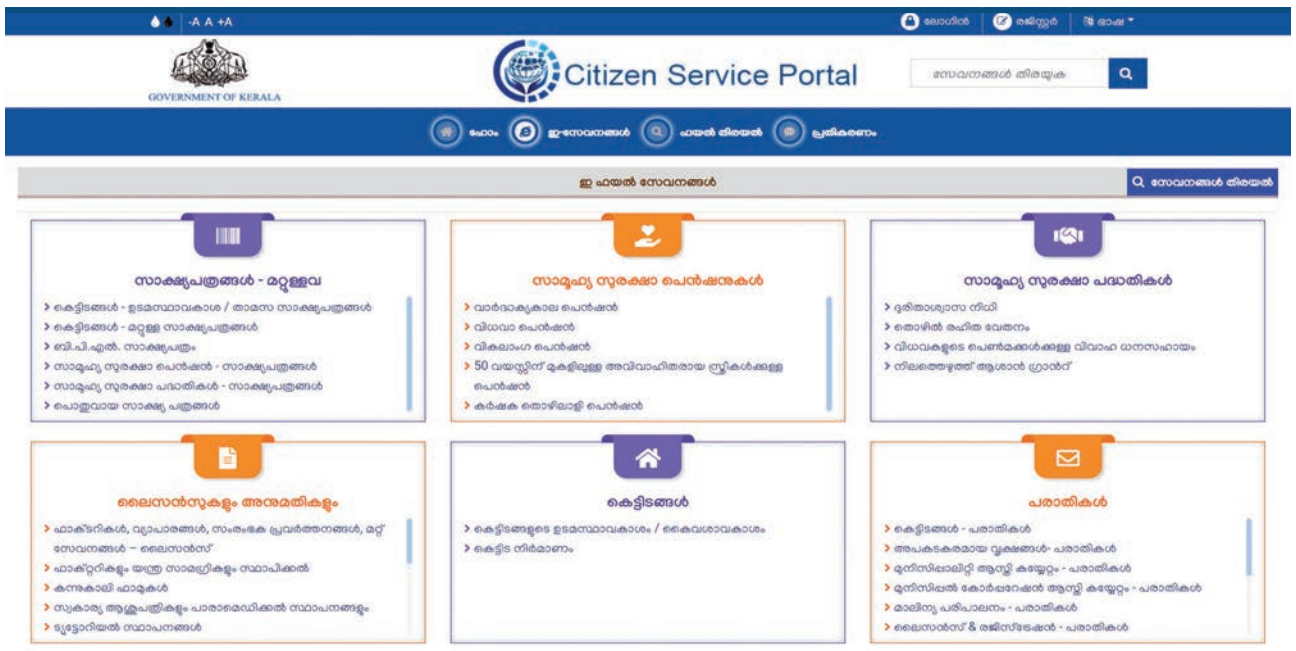
The Information Kerala Mission has been working towards achieving a vision of hustle free transparent execution of general public requirements starting from the bottom level over the last two years. As a result of this, the Integrated Local Governance Management System (ILGMS), a comprehensive software developed by the Information Kerala Mission was deployed across 150 GramaPanchayats in October 2020, to ensure greater transparency, accountability, accuracy, punctuality and technical supervision in providing various services to the citizens.

“Our government had begun a lot of initiatives to resolve the glitches and issues arising from the citizen front using government services. The Chief Minister and Chief Secretary of our state were seriously concerned and considered the possibilities of making it easier for the public to receive local body services without the hustle of repeated visits to the body. Digitisation of local self-government services or the ILGMS

Kerala is setting milestones in its path of self-growth and development. There is more to achieve, for sure, yet a success story such as the ILGMS gives the hope and inspiration to move forward and the belief that we are on the right path.

was implemented as a crucial part of ease of receiving services, from the citizen front. It is so easy now to apply for a birth certificate or marriage registration or building permit. Over 213 services like this is provided over the digital portals. A person can apply, track and download their required document without stepping in or out of a local body. This was our primary aim!”, said Smt Sarada Muraleedharan IAS, Additional Chief Secretary and Chairman of Executive Committee of IKM.

The Integrated Local Government Management System (ILGMS) is a vision for typical governance management with a suite of satellite software applications integrated to a stem software application. An innovative software application developed by the Information Kerala Mission in collaboration with the Panchayats, ILGMS can make the administrative procedures and services of the GramaPanchayats transparent and accessible to the public. In the first phase, ILGMS has been deployed in 153 GramaPanchayats in Kerala. In the second phase, steps have been taken to deploy ILGMS in 150 GramaPanchayats. These 303 GramaPanchayats have made it easy for the public to apply online for 213 services, make online payments and access services online through logged in software and Akshaya Centers. In the remaining 638 GramaPanchayats, the facility to apply for services online and to pay the application fee online has been made available through the Citizen Portal, a part of ILGMS itself.



Information is one of the most crucial elements in a trustworthy administration. With information comes clarity and from clarity comes transparency and with transparency comes trust. And trust is crucial in a democracy! From knowing the status of a certificate applied from a Panchayat, to knowing the budget expenditure of the state, the public is empowered to know. This is the foundation of the execution of the ILGMS, where a citizen is duly credited with the information they require regarding any service with the local self-governments.

The ILGMS has been set up to check the application form at the front office to ensure that it is complete and to have all the relevant documents and to review the accepted application online and make a timely decision. The status of the applications can be tracked and the service can be ensured including the public.

Applications for various certificates, including building ownership, BPL, property tax exemption application, RTI application, Ease of Doing certification, licensing and renewal applications and development and project proposals are available on

the ILGMS and its Citizen Portal. Currently 213 services are available in the portal.

Smt Sarada Muraleedharan IAS also added that the next big step of the government is to work on the backend of the ILGMS now that the citizen frontend has been taken care of and put into action effectively and efficiently. Another part of the next step is to develop a full-fledged dashboard for all sections of the Panchayats and Corporations.

“It is going to redefine the efficiency of the local self-government bodies”, she concluded in enthusiasm amidst her busy schedule of planning.

‘In the SDG achievement ranking, Kerala tops in India with a score of 70. In the world ranking, while India is way below at 117, Kerala’s score would give it a rank equivalent to 73. The state is poised to reach the SDG goals by 2030 in most of the sectors, particularly in health, education, hunger and poverty. The local governments play a key role in the provision of the above basic needs and protection of livelihoods at the local level. During the past 25 years, after the launch of People’s Plan Campaign, Kerala has consistently been the front-ranking state in

devolution. Even the Reserve Bank of India, in its State Finances Annual Report 2020, deemed it fit to laud the role of local governments in Kerala’s Covid response success. They provide a broad platform for people cutting across political divides to cooperate in addressing local problems. The outcomes so far have been encouraging enough to make the state recommit itself to strengthening the democratic decentralisation process further,’ said an article by the New Indian Express on the developmental progress of Kerala during the LDF administration.

Kerala is setting milestones in its path of self-growth and development. There is more to achieve, for sure, yet a success story such as the ILGMS gives the hope and inspiration to move forward and the belief that we are on the right path. IKM is only one of the many major endeavours the LDF Government has initiated. And there’s no denying the results have been extremely promising. On our way forward, we set examples and expectations for ourselves that is met with the highest details of planning and execution. And hereby, we lead. Leaving behind trails for others to follow in the tales of action ●



Benyamin bagged the Vayalar Award

Novelist and short-story writer Benyamin has bagged the Vayalar Award for his eminent literary work, 'Mantharirile 20 Communist Varshangal'. The Award consists of a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh and a bronze sculpture. Benyamin's novel portrays the story in the backdrop of a village called Mantharir and the influence of religion and politics in its culture. In 'Mantharirile 20 Communist Varshangal', he tries to showcase the life of inhabitants of Mantharir village, and how the political and religious impacts are intervened through the life of people. He began writing 'Akkaporinte Irupathu Nasrani Varshangal', which he opines as to the first part of the Mantharir stories, in 2005. The novel was selected for recognition by the panel comprising writers K R Meera, George Onakkoor, and C Unnikrishnan. Benyamin, is best known for award-winning novels such as 'Aadujeevitham' (Goat Days) and 'Mullappooniramulla Pakalukal' (Jasmine Days) and short stories. He is a recipient of the Kerala Sahithya Akademi Award, the Crossword Book Award, the JCB Prize for Literature and the Muttathu Varkey Award.

Kerala Administrative Service results announced



KAS

The first rank list of Kerala Administrative Service (KAS) conducted by the Kerala Public Service Commission was announced. S.Malini is the topper in the KAS exam for the first stream. Nandana S. Pillai is ranked second and Gopika Udayan is ranked third. In the second Stream, Akhila Chacko ranked topper, Jayakrishnan KG secured second rank and Parvathy Chandran. L ranked third in the KAS exam. In the third stream, Anup Kumar. V bagged first rank, Ajeesh. K ranked second and, Pramod G.V ranked third in the KAS exam. The results were published after the preliminary, final exams, and subsequent interviews. Out of the three streams - 197, 189 and 196 candidates had appeared for the final interview. The Kerala Administrative Service will be functional from November 1, on the occasion of the Kerala Formation Day. The Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms has identified 105 vacancies. Of this, 90 vacancies will be reported to the PSC. Thirty people from each of the three streams would be appointed in the first batch. The rank list will have a validity of one year. The candidates will be appointed after an 18 month-long training.

Ensuring zero vaccine wastage



Joby Baby
Nurse



Kerala is the only state to have ensured zero COVID-19 vaccine wastage in India according to the data released by the central government. When many states squandered nearly 18 percent of vaccine doses, Kerala also managed to administer the extra doses available per vial. Month of May 2021 Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan took to Twitter to announce Kerala's success "Kerala has received 73,38,806 doses of vaccine from Gol. We've provided 74,26,164 doses, even making use of the extra dose available as a wastage factor in each vial. Our health workers, especially nurses, have been super-efficient and deserve our wholehearted appreciation".

On March 17, government data showed that Telangana reported the highest vaccine wastage rate (17.6%), followed by Andhra Pradesh (11.6%) and Uttar Pradesh (9.4%). Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the Kerala healthcare staff for their efforts in reducing vaccine wastage, as the state has emerged as one of the few states with zero Covid-19 vaccine wastage so far. He said, "Good to see our healthcare workers and nurses set an example in reducing vaccine wastage. Reducing vaccine wastage is important in strengthening the fight against Covid-19." Dr Mohammed Asheel, executive director, Kerala Social Security Mission echoed this. "Our nurses are good at their job. They were told to ensure zero wastage of the vaccine and they have achieved it," he said.

On 7th June 2021 Health Minister Veena George lauded the vaccination team for their service, adding that the state has so far administered 1,00,13,186 doses. An earlier estimate found that 74,26,164 doses were administered using vials meant for just 73,38,806 doses, which means 87,358 extra jabs were given.

How Kerala win against Vaccine Wastage

Wastage normally occurs at three levels: during transportation, at the cold chain point; and at a vaccination site — both at service and delivery levels. Kerala implemented strict protocols for storage, transportation and usage of the vaccine and everyone involved in the massive immunisation exercise, both in private and



government hospitals, were trained as per the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare guidelines before the vaccination drive started in the country. Proper vaccine inventory management was also ensured.

Each 5 ml vial of the vaccine has 10 doses (for 10 persons) in total. A skilled nurse can get up to 11 to 13 doses from each vial. Generally, there is 1.1 % wastage of the vaccine. In other words, in a vial of 10 dosages, one dosage may be wasted, with only 8 to 9 persons getting vaccinated from one vial instead of 10. A vial once opened also needs to be used up within a certain time limit. If the doses from the vial are not administered in time, they have to be thrown away. This means that there has to be a sufficient number of people willing and ready to be vaccinated at a time in order to ensure maximum efficiency.

Along with this, Kerala also guaranteed that those eligible for the vaccination showed up on time for the jab. This is important as once

the vial is opened, the doses have to be consumed within four hours, otherwise it goes to waste, and remaining doses have to be destroyed. To overcome this, Kerala decided that they would use a vial only after ensuring that there are 10 people available for the jab.

Initially when there were glitches in the CoWIN app, the staff in each vaccination centre would prepare a list of those who have registered for the vaccination and contact them personally on the day of the vaccination as many didn't receive SMS about the vaccination registration. Also spot registration was also encouraged. Also, the health department worked to create awareness about the benefits of Covid vaccination.

According to media reports, sometimes, it is common practice for vials to have extra vaccines, which is known as an overfill. This is to compensate for any spillage or wastage that may occur while the vaccine is being administered. An

overfill will mostly be the leftover vaccine in a vial, or it can also be when the vaccine is trapped in a dead space – between the syringe and the needle.

Better mobilisation in Kerala

At the primary health centre (PHC) level, ASHAs are able to mobilise [vaccine beneficiaries] which provides a predictable number of people and better planning. The district administration records data based on an annual family health survey under the reproductive and child health programme conducted by healthcare staff such as junior public health nurses (JPHN) and auxiliary nurse-midwives (ANM). This provides a good estimate of the number of households in each ward and ensures that vials are fully used in every session. Good planning and training often allow the staff to administer the optimal 10 doses per vial a day.

Lessons For Other States

Kerala has set the example for other states. They have shown how with proper training, education and optimal use of existing infrastructure, a large public healthcare project like the current vaccination drive against the COVID-19 pandemic can be efficiently rolled out. Not only were nurses and healthcare workers trained, but people were encouraged since the beginning of the vaccination drive to go out and get vaccinated.

According to the health experts in Kerala, it is important that:

- **Daily vaccination drives must be well mobilised and planned.**
- **Vials must be opened only after 10 beneficiaries arrive.**
- **Adequate training must be given to healthcare workers on how to draw doses.**
- **Rumours and misinformation about vaccines must be dealt with strictly.**
- **Cold chain system must be maintained properly.**

The healing touch of Mahatma Gandhi



Ajith Venniyoor
Gandhian Scholar



The life of an individual gets identified with the history of a nation and an epoch- this is a rare occurrence in the history of the world. This is what the world witnessed happening in India during the past one century and a half. That is one of the reasons why the life of Mahatma Gandhi remains a textbook for the human race as the years roll by.

Medical science looking out for remedies for the COVID pandemic has identified maintenance of cleanliness as the first step. Mahatma Gandhi was a practical man, who realized without the support of research data that the wrong lifestyle and lack of cleanliness is the main factor for the spread of contagious diseases.

Not only during political crises, but also during natural calamities and the spread of epidemics people have experienced Ganhiji's soothing touch of kindness. He has also experimented with lasting solutions for very complex problems. There is an article of Gandhi, much discussed and reprinted in several languages with a sense of wonder at this time, when India and the world stand terrified at the impact of the microscopic pathogen, Corona.

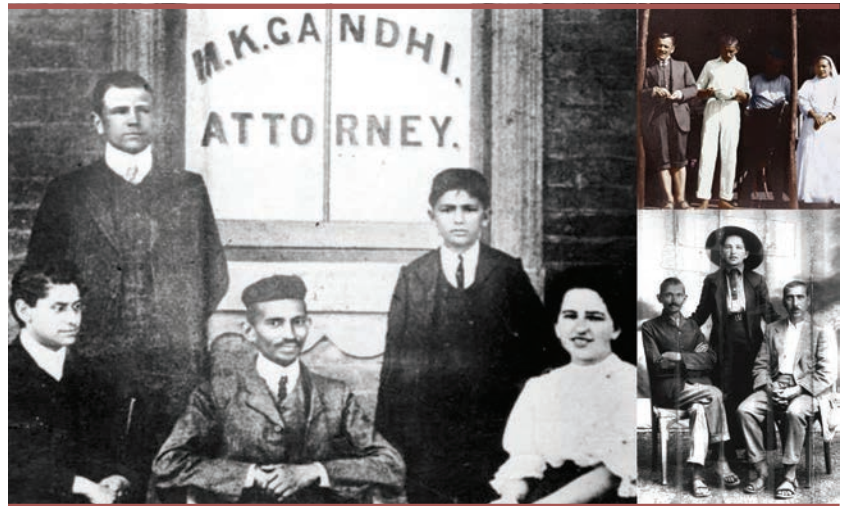
“When Gandhi battled an epidemic: His directives on how to contain the South

African plague can be useful for COVID-hit India”, is the title of the article, published on 4 June 2020 by Hindustan Times. The author is Gopalkrishna Gandhi, grandson of Gandhi and former Governor of West Bengal. The article begins by quoting from the editorial Gandhi wrote in the ‘Indian Opinion’, the journal he published from Durban in four languages- English, Hindi, Gujarati and Tamil- on 16 January 1905. In the context of the spread of the lethal Plague in South Africa during 1904-05. The content of the article was the ‘Plague Protocol’ Gandhi prepared in consultation with doctors close to him, while the British authorities adopted a wait and see attitude. The editorial begins like the following:

“Once again the dark clouds are

gathering. It will be to the great benefit of our people if they bear in mind the following rules; otherwise, there would be immense harm. What is more, it might be used as an argument for enacting more severe laws against us:

- (1) No one should think that the government will harass the patient after taking him to the hospital.
- (2) The government should be immediately informed in case of a sudden attack of fever or asthma.
- (3) A doctor should be immediately consulted.
- (4) Everyone should stay where he is without becoming panic.
- (5) Those who might have come in contact with a plague patient should not try to conceal the fact but should come forward to have their clothes etc, disinfected.
- (6) One should not, under any circumstances, have one's bedroom attached to the shop to save money.
- (7) One should not stock any goods for sale in one's house.
- (8) One should keep one's house scrupulously clean.
- (9) Every house or room should be well-lighted and well-ventilated.
- (10) One should sleep with the windows open.
- (11) The clothes worn by day as well as those used during the night should be kept clean.
- (12) The food taken should be light and simple.
- (13) Lavish dinners and feasts should be stopped.
- (14) Dry earth or ashes should be provided in latrines where buckets are used, and everyone should after easing himself cover the night soil thoroughly with these so that no flies sit thereon.
- (15) Lavatories and urinals should be kept clean.
- (16) The floors and other parts of the house should be washed clean with disinfecting fluid mixed in hot water.
- (17) No article from an infected place should be used elsewhere.
- (18) More than two persons should not sleep in a room of normal proportions.
- (19) One should not sleep in the kitchen, dining room or the larder.
- (20) Walls should be plastered with cement to keep out rats. Care should, most of all should be taken to see that foodstuffs are kept beyond their reach.
- (21) Those who always work indoors should go out into the open



air and walk a couple of miles daily for exercise.”

One can see behind each of the items he has listed the presence of the rat. It is a plague-resisting list. Yet, the notes of caution, in points 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18, read like they have been written for our present COVID-19 pandemic.

The article was reprinted in almost all the journals in South Africa. The Health Department used it as propaganda material. The Government officially acknowledged that it was highly effective.

Back to 1896. For the first time Plague had spread in India. Gandhi was back at Rajkot on leave for a few days. He formed a Plague Prevention Committee including local leaders and health workers and provided leadership to preventive activities. They visited homes and educated the people on keeping the surroundings clean. He focused on colonies of the poor untouchables. High caste people joined him. Gandhiji was seen everywhere at work.

During the 1899-1902 period, when the war for domination between the British and the Boers was at its peak, Gandhi, with the help of Indian doctors and nurses formed the 'Indian Ambulance Corps' to care for the wounded. He worked night and day to save hundreds of precious lives.

In 1902, the war situation still prevailing, Plague spread in areas thickly populated by Indians and in 1904 it spread to the gold mines in Johannesburg. Putting all other occupations aside, Gandhi swung into action along with Indian volunteers. They were able to save the lives of many. The journals and even the British praised Gandhi. After returning to India in 1917 and after the completion of the Champaran struggle, when the Plague spread in Kochrab in Bihar, Gandhiji was at the forefront of health volunteers.

In 1924 Kerala suffered deluge on account of terrible flood which was widespread and resulted in massive loss of life and property. It was the worst ever flood in the State. To provide relief to the victims of flood Mahatma Gandhi issued an appeal to the people on 17th August 1924 in Navjivan under the caption 'Relief Work in Malabar'. Following his appeal, people from various walks of life including women and children had donated even their gold jewels and meagre savings to help the flood-affected people.

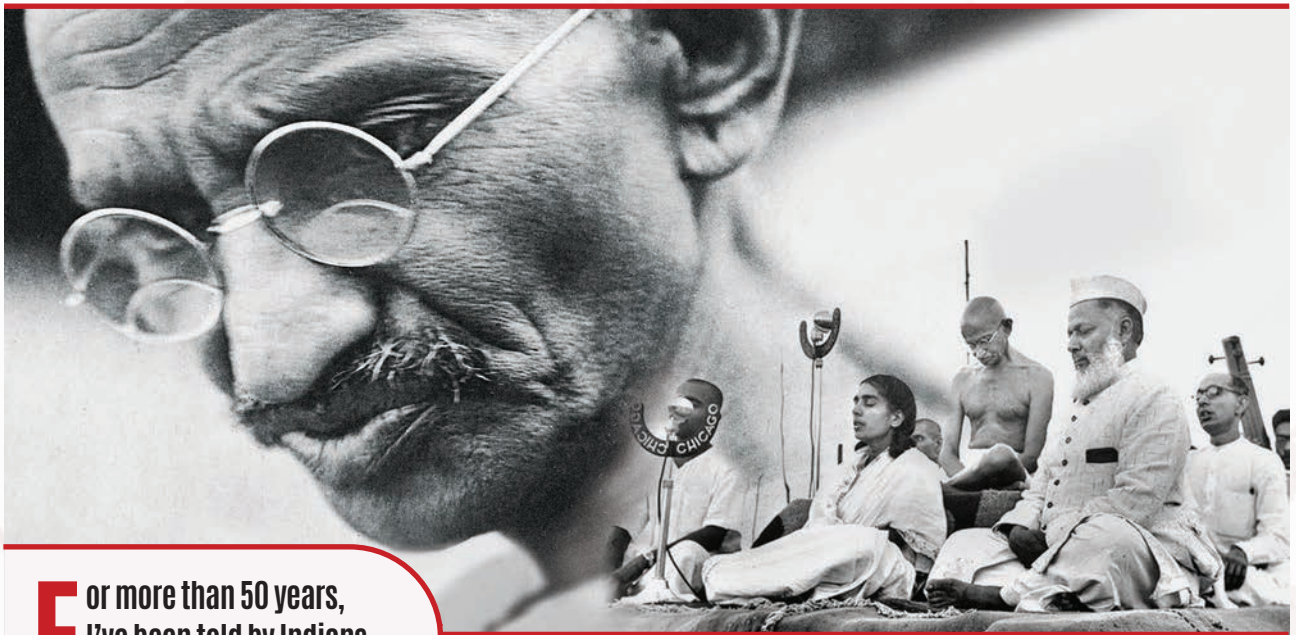
A sentence in the article Gandhi wrote in Navajeevan dated 17 August 1924 deserves special attention: “.... We know not what law governs our birth, life and death. Whatever it is, as long as we desire to live, it is our natural and inescapable duty to help others to live” ●

Gandhi's concept of secularism



Douglas Allen

Professor Emeritus of Philosophy,
The University of Maine



For more than 50 years, I've been told by Indians that pluralist, inclusivist, tolerant India is exceptional in embracing all religions and respecting every religion. M.K Gandhi would be pleased, since this seems to reflect his concept of secularism. Let's follow Gandhi's advice. He consistently challenges us to examine our concepts, even by those who claim to identify with his ahimsa, satya, satyagraha, swaraj, constructive program, and other values integrally related to his concept of secularism.

Secularism has many meanings, Western and Indian, Gandhian and anti-Gandhian. In *Hind Swaraj* and other works and practices, Gandhiji presents radical critiques of dominant British and other concepts of "Modern Civilization." He urges colonized Indians not to worship Western concepts, and to recognize that India has a more moral, philosophical, religious, and political concept of secularism.

Consider dramatic passages key to Gandhiji's concept of secularism. He believes in the fundamental truth of all great religions. All great religions, at their spiritual core and indiverse ways, express the same essential truth, including the truth of ahimsa (nonviolence). Gandhi believes "the different religions are beautiful flowers from the same garden, or they are

branches of the same majestic tree." Religions are equally true, although experienced and interpreted through equally imperfect human means. Therefore, all religions are in essential ways true, and, at the same time, imperfect and express untruths that need to be challenged and overcome.

The Indian Constitution and legal system affirm that India is a secular state. They emphasize the separation of state and the political from the religious, guaranteeing protection of citizens from religious and political interference, and protection of the religious from state political and other interference. The secular state guarantees freedom of religion and freedom from religion. We are to be treated equally regardless of whether we do or do not identify

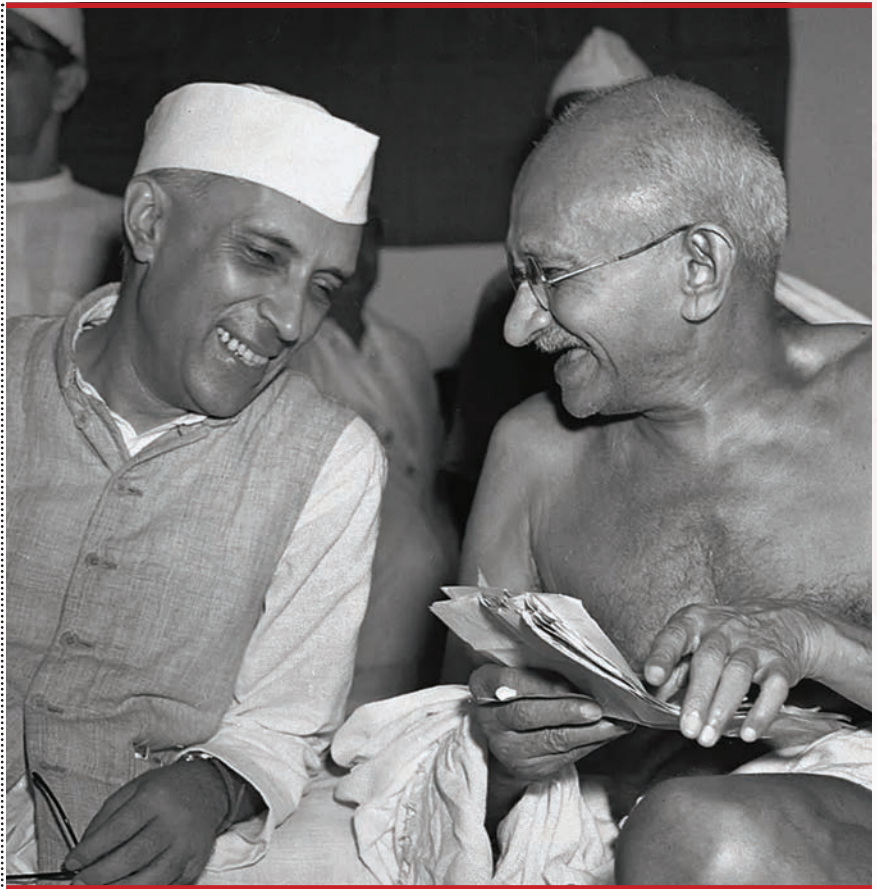
with a religion. The Indian state and legal system are not to promote or interfere with any religion. This strict separation of the state, the political, and the legal from the religious is not always absolute, as when the state bans caste-based untouchability and other practices as part of its secularism. Putting the Gandhi-informed Indian concept of secularism into practice is often contextually complex and controversial.

There are complex, paradoxical, and contradictory features that Gandhi experiences in his formulations and applications of his concept of secularism. Even the exemplary Mahatma struggles in trying to apply his concept of secularism in solving communal conflicts, class and caste and gender and other crises.

Consider two tendencies in Gandhi's concept of secularism. On the one hand, Gandhi, while upholding the universal truth of religion, sees one's religious life as a completely personal affair and advocates complete separation of state and religion. "I swear by my religion. I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The state has nothing to do with it. The state would look after your secular welfare, health, communications, foreign relations, currency and so on, but not your or my religion. That is everybody's personal concern."

On the other hand, Gandhi often blurs or rejects modern Western and other formulations of strict separation of the religious and the political. In Gandhi-informed ways, he promotes the religionization of politics, so that

He believes in the fundamental truth of all great religions. All great religions, at their spiritual core and in diverse ways, express the same essential truth, including the truth of ahimsa (nonviolence).



Gandhi's concept of secularism remains of greatest significance and urgency for India and the world.

the political is experienced and expressed ethically and spiritually, and the politicization of religion, so that the religious has an action-oriented focus on worldly suffering, exploitation, oppression, injustice, and lack of well-being. This may create confusion and is often exploited by Indians and others who are superficially and misleadingly Gandhian, as well as non-Gandhian and anti-Gandhian.

Gandhi often expresses key concepts integrally interrelated with his secularism by affirming that he is shaped by ancient Hindu scriptures and other texts, ethics, philosophy, and religion. Of course, consistent with his secularism, he also identifies as a Christian, a

Muslim, and with other religious and nonreligious positions. He also affirms that non-Hindus, as well as Hindus, can equally understand the universal truth of secularism.

I conclude that Gandhi's concept of secularism remains of greatest significance and urgency for India and the world. Gandhi's conceptualization is often essentialized, abstracted, idealized, an expression of his imagined dreams, as he often qualifies his concepts. There are growing gaps between Gandhi's ideal of secularism and contextualized thoughts, intentions, policies, and actions in India today. Gandhi now challenges us in most meaningful ways to transform our actual, imperfect, relative expressions of secularism into more ethical, philosophical, spiritual, religious, and political relative expressions of Indian secularism closer to the Gandhian ideal ●

Eternal compositions



Dr. Achuthsankar S. Nair
Professor & Head, Dept. of Computational
Biology & Bioinformatics, University of Kerala



As is well known, 1760- the 1850s was a special period in the history of Carnatic music. Beside the Kaveri river we had the three suns shining together bringing up the high noon of Carnatic music. Towards the end of the period, farther down south, beside the Karamana river in Thiruvananthapuram, the Swathi star appeared, shining brightly but briefly. We are now celebrating the 150th year of Swathi's demise.

Swathi Thirunal was not only a composer of Carnatic music but also a proponent of modern education and science. In a letter dated 4th January 1843 (available in the Royal Society (London) Achieves), Swathi Thirunal, writes regarding the continuation of the Observatory in Trivandrum thus: Here I must not omit to say, in diametrical opposition to what the Resident has been pleased to intimate to you as my sentiments, that neither such mean idea has ever entered into my head, nor have I, either directly or indirectly communicated anything upon this point to the above purport, but on the contrary, my sense of the high advantage derived from this

establishment in a scientific point of view, as I am fully sensible that by reason of my patronizing it, my name, however, undeserving of any celebrity is favourably noticed even in distant regions, among the scientific personages of the present day. Swathi Thirunal was an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society. The news of Swathi's demise was not an event confined to Travancore or India. It got reported in England and Australia. In the proceedings of the 24th-anniversary meeting of the Asiatic Society held on 8th May 1847, the first item was an obituary on Swathi Thirunal. His Highness the Raja of Travancore, who died at his

palace of Trivandrum on the 27th of December last, an Honorary Member of this Society, was eminently distinguished among the princes of India as an enlightened patron of learning and science. To an extensive acquaintance with the languages and literature of Southern India, he added the knowledge of Sanskrit, Persian, and English. The early death of this enlightened and princely patron of true science is a subject of just regret... Another obituary from Allen's Indian Mail, and Register of Intelligence of British & Foreign India, China, & All Parts of the East, of 1847: Among the native princes of India, he was distinguished for his superior intelligence and extensive acquirements in oriental literature. He is not unknown to fame in the European world, for most of you must be aware that the deceased Rajah maintained an observatory at considerable expense, and that Mr Caldecott was for a length of time, his highness's astronomer. The ephemeris emanating from the Travancore observatory was a valuable contribution to astronomical science ...

This author had the luck to unearth a book printed in Malayalam

Many Malayalam Books refer to Swathi Thirunal compositions as "Kalpichundakkiya Krithi" which when literally translated is "made under instructions". Well, if we do accept this literal translation, then we will also have to accept certain other translations, to be consistent. And the conclusions would be as follows: All former Travancore kings must be alive today because they never passed away, they only left the land (Malayalam records say – "Naadu Neengi" which is literally only "left the land").

in 1853 (ie, a few years after the demise of Swathi Thirunal) with 60 compositions of Swathi. This was discovered from the family house of a Mullammoodu Bhagavathar, Appu Bhagavathar (father of Dr. T. K. Moorthy).

Oriental Music in European Notation, a monumental work published in Madras in 1813, contains songs of Swathi Thirunal and also some interesting references. In the section on peculiarities in Indian Music, China Swamy Muthaliar's says: A good many composers take also a particular delight in arranging their music and words in such a manner that the syllables pronounced coincide with the name s of the notes sung at the commencement of a bar or the conclusion of a phrase; and this is considered a great feat; even such a distinguished authority as his late highness KULASEKHARA Maharaja of Travancore did not consider this artifice beneath his dignity; a large number of his compositions have been framed in accordance with this principle; two specimens are given below;- in this publication ... A footnote in the page above also states: A certain musician who had composed a melody in this style appeared before the Maharaja and boasted that he had accomplished an extraordinary feat such as had never been attempted before. His Highness at once produced several pieces of the same kind, to show that he himself was capable of doing a great deal more without difficulty. It was Subbarama Deekshithar, son of the brother of Muthuswami Deekshithar who wrote a brief biography of Swathi Thirunal as a Vaggeyakara in his famous Sangeetha Samprathaya Pradarshini in 1904. He also gives 3 songs of Swathi in notation. C.R. Day's famous book on "The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and Deccan" published from London in 1891, gives the staff notation for 3 Swathi compositions and lists "Famous Indian Musicians of the South" beginning with "Tiagya Raja". Soon to follow are "SiamaSastri" and "Diksitalu", followed by "The late

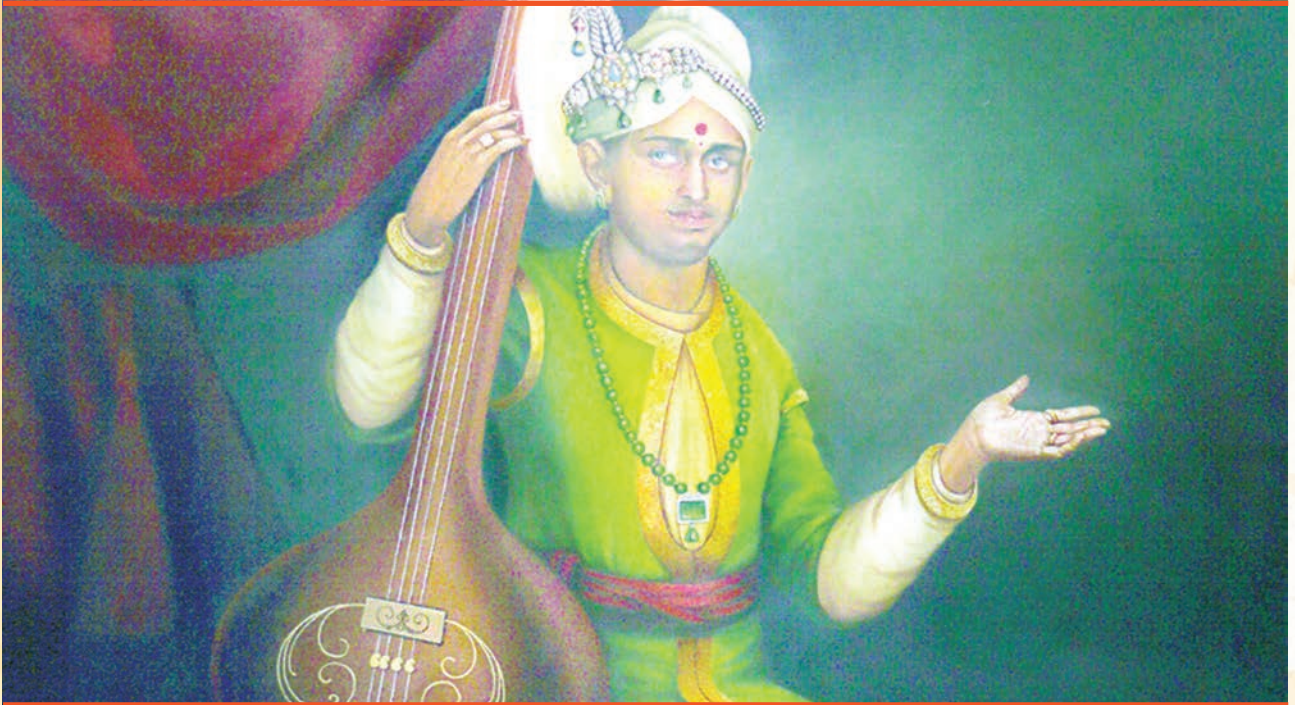
Maharaja Kolasekhara of Travancore".

Chidambara Vadhyar published 316 songs without notation. Renganathayyar, son of a courtier of Swathi published in notation, 125 songs. He followed it up with a notation of Kuchelopakhyanam songs in Sangeetha Rajarangom in 1922. By 1907, Swathi songs appeared in Gramophone records (Appunni Menon of Madras sang Sarasa Samamukha). Since 1910 Swathi songs were taught in schools by Bhagavathar teachers paid at Rs 6/- per month. Text Book was prescribed as Renganatha Iyer's book printed in parts. A very rarely known fact is that a few years before Sri Swathi Thirunal Music Academy was founded in Trivandrum, a Swathi Thirunal Music School was functioning in Trivandrum, run by Narasimhan Thampi whose wife was the great-granddaughter of Irayimman Thampi.

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Chidamabara Vadhyar's book has a long preface in Malayalam and also English. Comparing the two is a quick way of resolving the meaning of "Kalpichundakkiya Krithi". The English version simply says "compositions of the Maharaja Swathi Thirunal".

The work done by Muthaiaha Bhagavathar and Chemmangudi Sreenivasalyer, due to the changing times (of radio and gramophone records) caught much attention and created an impression that all Swathi songs were given music by them. This author presented a comparison of



available musical notations with what was done in the 1940s in the Madras Music Academy in 2008, to show that there was only embellishment, not fresh tuning. They also possibly gave it a new life through this, making it suited to the current times by discounting the sopana styles in the rendering of earlier days.

In addition to embellishments, about 30 and odd songs which were discovered in palm leaves without reference to Ragas and Thalas were set to music by them. While this is not to be criticized, they are to be criticized for mixing it with compositions that were already known in notation, without making any indication that the music for the new set is not Swathi's. Retuning or fresh tuning is below 10-15%. However, it is very difficult to correct this notion. Even though Renganatha Iyer has given a notation of Mohana Kalyani Krithi in 1918, many believe that Muthaiah Bhagavathar tuned it in 1942!

Is Swathi Thirunal equal to the Trinity? Should the trinity be

a quartette? These were hotly debated during the controversy raised by Balachander. There are no perfect ways to prove the equality of anyone. What are the parameters anyway? By popularity and fame (and maybe even without parameters), Tyagaraja is unmatched. Those who have taken pains to understand the Navavarana Krithis of Deekshithar may think he is superior in spiritual depth and its integration with music. Fans of Syama Sastri may consider him superior simple for the Yadukulakamboji Swarajathi. What about Swathi Thirunal? In terms of forms and languages, he stands out. As a composer? I would not even consider comparing a man of 33 years who practised part-time composing with trinity who dedicated their lives to nada yoga and who lived 3 or 4 decades more than Swathi.

For a totally different reason, I would think it is just to place him on the same pedestal: as a contemporary of the trinity from Kerala, who through his own music and his patronage, established Carnatic music in

This author had the luck to unearth a book printed in Malayalam in 1853 (ie, a few years after the demise of Swathi Thirunal) with 60 compositions of Swathi. This was discovered from the family house of a Mullammoodu Bhagavathar, Appu Bhagavathar (father of Dr. T. K. Moorthy).

Kerala (this is a criticism as well—many Sopana admirers feel that he put an end to the Sopana tradition). Six moorthies – Thyagaraja, Deekshithar, Shyama Sastri along with Puandara Dasa, Annamacharya and Swathi Thirunal would be a cynosure to all south Indian eyes. The cause of Carnatic music is well served when it is iconically connected to all states of south India.

[The author is a researcher on Swathi Thirunal and has recently published a book titled "Swathi Thirunal – A composer born to a mother", published by State Institute of Languages] ●

The Sultan of Mappila Pattu



Faizal Elettil
Mappila Pattu Critic

The question as to where a genius like V. M. Kutty can be placed in the vast canvas of an art form like Mappila pattu (Moplah songs) is likely to confound, at least for a split second, even those who know him well. That is because he was a multi-faceted artiste who gained fame for contributing greatly to all aspects Mappila pattu, besides being a singer. It is impossible to limit him to any one label. In other words, the void he leaves behind with his passing on can never be filled.



his repertoire, and this helped catapult the genre to the heights of popularity. His service to the field lay in the interest and vigilance he exhibited in taking the historically important lyrics penned by Mambalathu Govindan Nair and P. Bhaskaran Mash to the masses, and more importantly, preserving the legacy of the tradition of Mappila pattu, thus saving them from a fate of oblivion. The fact that his native village of Pulikkal was close to Kondotty helped him transfer this wealth to the descendants of Mahakavi Moitheenkutty Vaidyar. V. M. Kutty was also a writer of some hugely popular Mappila pattu like “Kiliye dikr paadi kiliye” and “Hajjinte raavil njaan Kaaba kinaavu kandu,” and others that celebrate religious harmony. He was also a marvellous painter whose works earned space in the print medium.

Having seen for himself the privations suffered by ordinary artistes, he lent them a helping hand, and succeeded in his philanthropic ventures. During the time he was an office bearer in institutions like Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi, Folklore Akademi, Moitheenkutty Vaidyar Mappila Kala Akademi and so on, he brought sweetness and light to very many households by using the governmental system to offer help to poor artistes. He was always conscious of the power of art to promote assimilation in a multicultural society. V. M. Kutty has left a mark in the field of Malayalam playback music too. Besides, he was a cornucopia, providing Mappila pattu to those who wished to incorporate it into films, and he also served as a member of the general council of Kerala Chalachitra Akademi.

Considering the magnitude of his contributions to this field of music, he deserves to be and will forever be hailed as the Sultan of Mappila pattu ●

While V.M. Kutty was undoubtedly a gifted singer, he showed greater prowess in his ability to organize a music troupe and lead it successfully. He was the person who drew Mappila pattu from its traditional confines – wedding venues and small social gatherings in villages – and placed it in front of the general public, presenting it to the accompaniment of an orchestra. This paved the way for many singers to come to the limelight. Those who made a name for themselves in this field – Vilayil Faseela, Mukkam Sajid, Vadakara Krishna Das Mash and others – were young talents who were given a leg-up by V. M. Kutty.

The music bands of old had certain special features that are perhaps inconceivable today. Each of the singers and troupes had specific songs all to

themselves. They competed with each other to compose the songs, set them to music and render them. This created a rich atmosphere for the birth of many dazzling songs. It is indeed an incontrovertible fact that V. M. Kutty was a pioneer who brought about significant changes in the field, and succeeded in leading the new system forward meticulously.

Besides introducing such a change, he also played a crucial role in bringing about a substantial improvement in the field. When Mappila pattu – which had limited itself to devotional songs, brimming with spiritual thoughts, and wedding songs – was brought into the wider social arena, V. M. Kutty took special care to include songs that focused on socially relevant issues too. Communal harmony became a staple in

Setting a new milestone



A. Chandrasekhar
Film Critic

Awards including the posthumous ones and also creating history by crowning M Jayachandran with the accolades for best music director and background scorer, the Kerala State Film Awards 2020 sets a new milestone in acknowledging deserving talents.



With its pinch of Feminist flavour, the decision of the Jury headed by ace actor-director Ms Suhasini Maniratnam was widely accepted and welcomed by film lovers at large. It also set a practice of previewing with two separate sub juries as in par with the National Film Award process headed by P Seshadri and Bhadrans Mattel respectively and they did select 34 films out of the total of 80 submitted for the consideration of the final jury headed by Ms Suhasini. Apart from the chairmen of the two subcommittees, the final jury also included M/s C K Muraleedharan, Mohan Sitara, M Harikumar, N Sasidharan along with C Ajoy, secretary of the KSCA as its member secretary.

The selection of Jeo Baby's *The Great Indian Kitchen* as the best movie was not only unanimous within the Jurors but also did satisfy the interests of the film buffs too. The movie which

had previously won the prestigious Padmarajan Award and the Film Critics Award had earned public and critical appeal as well. Jeo Baby, for this movie, won the award for the best script award also and for him, the movie that fetched Sidharth Siva the best director award also is a bonus as he has been featured in that movie as one of the pivotal characters. *Ennivar*, a movie that has been brilliantly envisaged and executed, that reveals the dark side of student politics of the state is of course Sidharth's best so far. The film also had in it a very stunning performance by actor Sudheesh for which he won the award for the best actor in a character role. Sreerikha's award for the best female actor in the supporting role too could be justified for her subtlety and command over that character.

Jayasurya's portrayal of a habitual drinker in the movie *Vellam* is definitively worth deserved for the

award for the best actor. This happens to be his second State Award. The film also fetched the award for the best male playback singer to Shahbaz Amman, bracketed with his song for the movie *Halal Love Story*. Young actress Anna Ben won the award for the best actress for her role in the movie *Kappela* directed by Mohammed Mustafa which won him the award for the debutant director too. Anna's award justifies the feminist perception of the Jury that got reflected in many of the other awards including the ones given to Nalini Jameela, Nanjiyamma and the special jury award for acting given to Siji Pradeep too. *The Great Indian Kitchen* and *Thinkalazhcha Nischayam*, which bagged the award for the second-best film also follow the temperament. *Thinkalazhcha Nischayam*, written and directed by Senna Hegde also bagged the award for the best story.

Two awards distinctively catch the heart of the audience. The one is given to Sachi aka K Satchithanandan posthumously for his movie Ayyappanum Koshiyum that hit the theatres as well as earned much critical attention last year. The film was selected as the best popular movie with the artistic appeal, an award that late Sachi would have loved to receive. So also the film

movie. Talking about the Sound department, Adarsh Joseph Cherian won the award for best sync sound (Santhoshathinte Onnam Rahasyam) whereas Tony Babu won the award for the Best Sound Design for his performance in the movie The Great Indian Kitchen. The award for the best lyricist too is worth mentioning, that was given to poet Anwar for his writings for the movies Bhumiyaile

Shoby Thilakan bagged the award for the best dubbing artist for his performance in Bhumiyaile Manohara Swakaryam.

Bonami directed by Tony Sukumar fetched the award for the best children's movie whereas Niranjana S bagged the award for the best male child artist for the movie Kasimite Kadal and Aravi Sharma bagged the



fetches the prestigious awards for the best music director, background score, best sound mixing (Ajith Abraham George) and best female singer (Nithya Mammen) and best dubbing artist-Female (Ria Saira) out of which the double award for M Jayachandran for becomes history. The film also won the award for the best choreography shared by Lalitha Sobi and Baby Xavier. It is for the first time in the history of the state awards that a musician is winning both the titles together and for the very same

Two awards distinctively catch the heart of the audience. The one is given to Sachi aka K Satchithanandan posthumously for his movie Ayyappanum Koshiyum that hit the theatres as well as earned much critical attention last year.

Manohara Swakaryam and Malik. The movie shot against the landscapes of the Himalayas, Kayattam fetched Chandru Selvaraj the state award for the best cinematographer while Mahesh Narayanan for his outstanding work as a director and editor in his experimental movie CU Soon, shot and edit across geographical boundaries using technological advancement during the Covid pandemic, won him the award for the best film editor. Kayattam also fetched the award for the best processing (Liju Prabhakar). Santhosh Raman's contribution to the movie Malik was acknowledged as the best production design whereas Rashid Ahmed won the award for the best make-up for the movie Article 21. Dhanya Balakrishnan was adjudged the best costumer for the movie Malik. Sarias Muhammed won the award for special effects for his work for the movie Love.

For Suhasini, her selection of the best movie and script may be something personal too as The Great Indian Kitchen is an extension of her role Vasanthi that she did enact in the KG George movie Adaminte Variyellu in the year 1983

award for female child artist for her role in Pyalee.

For Suhasini, her selection of the best movie and script may be something personal too as The Great Indian Kitchen is an extension of her role Vasanthi that she did enact in the KG George movie Adaminte Variyellu in the year 1983. The very significance of The Great Indian Kitchen is that it did reflect the never-changing female archetype that is still an unfortunate reality in Kerala society ●

The prince of melody



Ravi Menon
Music Critic



Decades after his demise, M.S. Baburaj's tunes still pervade the atmosphere. They can never be severed from the private moments of every Malayali. The wheels of Time will turn. The technology will progress beyond imaginable limits. Tastes may change drastically. But Baburaj's scores will still dance on the lips of the youth as they are timeless tunes.

The magician's fingers lay tired and dozing on the keys of the harmonium. The owner of those numb fingers could hardly contain his tears. Nor was he able to draw up energy even to speak. He merely sat with his head bowed.

"That picture hurts my mind to this day," says Hariharan the film director. How could it not but hurt? It was none other than M. S. Baburaj, the sultan of melody, who filled his entire frame of vision. In his childhood, Hariharan had stood dumbfounded at the sight of those fingers darting and flowing, as quick as lightning, over the keyboard of the harmonium,

and vanishing just as quickly. And it was to savour that very magic all over again that Hariharan had given Baburaj the responsibility of composing music for "Yaagaashwam," a film which Hariharan himself wrote the story for, produced and directed.

By then, Baburaj had almost completely distanced himself from mainstream film industry. The crowds, the hustle and bustle, the clamour and the admirers' cries of "Wah! Wah!" that characterized the earlier days were gone. Even when he withdrew into seclusion, the downpour of tunes had hardly stopped inside Baburaj's mind.

But what could he do with his music if there was no money in his possession? “My aim was to arrange a platform for Baburaj’s return,” Hariharan says. “There was another secret purpose too. I wanted to see for myself those fingers conversing with the harmonium, once again.”

Baburaj was the music director of Hariharan’s debut film “Ladies’ Hostel” (1973). It had one of the most beautiful ghazals ever sung in Malayalam cinema, “jeevitheshwari kekuvaan oru prema lekhanam ezhuthi . . .” [I wrote a love letter for the goddess of my life to listen to] sung by Yesudas. This was the same song that Hariharan’s mind unconsciously crooned as he sat in Hotel Ashoka in Chennai, waiting for Baburaj to come and compose music for his “Yaagaashwam”.

Finally, Baburaj came. But this was not the Baburaj of old. He did not arrive lavishly dressed, like a prince, his chest thrust forward, and exuding a cloud of Eau de Cologne. By now, Baburaj had begun to wilt under the heat of severe setbacks in life. He had not fully recovered from the impact of a stroke. Age had begun to catch up with him. And its attendant weakness. But the innocent smile on his face had not lost even a little bit of its sheen, Hariharan recalls.

The lyricists were Mankombu Gopalakrishnan and Yusuf Ali Kecheri. “When it was time for composing the score, Babukka

Yet he had a distinct flair for composing tunes that were a perfect fit for whichever situation, character or background was presented in the film, and that too in a very short span of time. Many a time, he put his listeners into a state of absolute wonderment and happy confusion by providing five or six different tunes for the same song.



Jayachandran & Baburaj

summoned his assistant Muthu and asked to sit him in front of the harmonium. Babukka hummed a tune, and Muthu played it on the harmonium. This was an unusual arrangement, and I was severely disappointed. It was not Babukka’s practice to compose music with the help of an assistant.”

Hariharan insisted that Baburaj himself should play the song on the harmonium.

Baburaj looked at Hariharan’s face with consternation. It was piteous, Hariharan admits, but he took the harmonium and placed in front of the composer. In the words of the late Ramu Kariat, the legendary film director, it was time for “Raja Baburaj’s durbar” to begin.

But this Baburaj had become a pale shadow of his younger avatar which remained fresh and vibrant in Hariharan’s memory. It was an extremely painful sight. The long and tapering fingers fumbled, no longer able to reign over the tunes or command the obedience of the harmonium, an instrument that had been a part of his very soul since childhood. They had almost lost their earlier suppleness and mobility. After a long-drawn battle, shame-faced and helpless, Baburaj sat with his head bowed. His eyes were

overflowing.

“I didn’t know how to respond,” Hariharan remembers. “I felt extremely guilty for having compelled Babukka to play the harmonium. That was when I realized the after-effects of the stroke had not left his body.”

Baburaj could have conceded defeat at that point, if he so wanted, and withdrawn. But the vigour and pride of the old sultan had not subsided in his mind. He plied his frozen-stiff fingers over the keys and continued. Enduring the pain, bit by bit, Baburaj wove the tunes of the song, as Hariharan and Mankombu looked on dazed and awe-struck.

The last song he composed in that session was “*velicham vilakkanachu, raatriye vennilaavum kaivedinju . . .*” [The sun put out its lamp, even the full moon abandoned the night] meant to be sung by Yesudas. Not even in his wildest dreams had Mankombu imagined, while penning the lyric, that this would be the swan song of Baburaj, the music composer. A couple of weeks after the recording of the song, Baburaj, the sun set. Mohammed Sabir Baburaj was gone for ever. On 7 October 1978, he passed on. “Yaagaashwam” was released two months later.

Baburaj’s journey towards the



Baburaj & Yesudas

golden path of Malayalam film industry was like a fairytale. His father was a Bengali named Jan Mohammad, a qawwali musician, who constantly toured the land, and visited Kerala now and then. In those days in Malabar, on the occasion of a wedding, the bride's and the groom's families conducted a musical competition on the eve of the ceremony. Both parties would employ professional qawwali troupes to add zest to the celebrations. Jan Mohammad used to come to Kerala to participate in these contests. During one such visit, he stayed on to marry a girl he had fallen in love with. A son was born of this union, and he was Baburaj.

With Jan Mohammad's premature death, however, the family fell into a crisis. There was no regular income, and this brought in starvation and misery into the life of the widow and her children. Young Baburaj was severely affected. He left home in search of a means of livelihood, wandering from place to place, drawing strength and inspiration from the musical legacy left in him, and singing like his father did. In the course of his extensive tours of the land, he studied at the feet of several gurus, and mastered the harmonium on the way.

By the time he returned home, he had become a singer and

harmonium player par excellence. In Kozhikode, his hometown, he got opportunities to work for the theatre, and even produced background music for a few songs for Akashavani. That was where he got introduced to P. Bhaskaran, the famous poet. Mesmerized by the sheer talent that Baburaj displayed, "Bhaskaran Maash" (as he was more popularly known and addressed in Kerala) invited him into the musical world of Malayalam film industry. Baburaj debuted in the film "Minnaminungu" (1957), and this marked the beginning of the Baburaj era in Malayalam film music.

The 1960s marked the golden era of Baburaj music. His scores played a vital role in shaping the culture of light music and its appreciation in the hearts of Malayalis. His songs flew beyond the horizon of the silver screen and soared heavenwards towards immortality. Baburaj joined the league of master composers like Devarajan, Raghavan and Dakshinamoorthy. Yet he had a distinct flair for composing tunes that were a perfect fit for whichever situation, character or background was presented in the film, and that too in a very short span of time. Many a time, he put his listeners into a state of absolute wonderment and happy confusion by providing five or six different tunes for the same song.

That was his usual practice.

It was almost seemed as if Baburaj's tagline was— You name it, I have it. His harmonium was always ready to compose songs for any mood, any genre, any subject – romance ("thaamasamende varuvaan," "prana sakhi," "thane thirinjum marinjum," "suruma ezhuthiya," "avidunnen gaanam kelkaan"), sorrow ("anuraaga naadakathil," "chudu kanneeraal en," "kannu thurakkaatha deivangale"), sorrow of separation ("vaasantha panchami naalil," "thaliritta kinaakkal"), religious fervour ("vaaka chaarthu kazhinoru," "kanninu kannaya kannu," "paavanaam aattidaya," "allavin kaarunyam"), parental affection ("appam venum ada venam," "thankam vegam urangiyaal," "paavakutti"), qawwali ("pancha varna thatha poley"), oppana ("pulli maanalla, mayilalla," "oru kotta ponnundallo"), philosophy ("ekaanthathayude apaaratheeram," "srishti than soundarya," "aadiyil vachanam undayi"), humour (aatte, pottey, irikkatte," "kandam bechoru coataamu," "perattin karayil vachu"), folk music ("poove nalla poove"), dance numbers ("oru pushpam maatram," "aadanumariyaam") and so on.

All these different tunes and forms played their roles willingly to the swing of his baton. At his merest touch, they turned into gold ●

I know not how thou singest, my master!



P.S. Rajasekharan
Former Addl. Director, I&PRD



“I know not how thou singest, my master! I ever listen in silent amazement. The light of thy music illumines the world. The life breath of thy music runs from sky to sky. The holy stream of thy music breaks through all stony obstacles and rushes on” - Gitanjali

Tagore may never have anticipated his lines becoming a soulful ballad in Malayalam, years after they were composed. Sri V.K. Sasidharan, the music maestro who died a few days back, breathed life into the beautiful translation by G. Shankara Kurup. The resultant song “Ethra manoharam aanavidu the gaanalaapana shailee” is a masterpiece, a testament to the musical prowess of V.K. Sasidharan.

Born in 1983 in North Paravur, Ernakulam, he graduated as an Electrical Engineer from the College of Engineering, Thiruvananthapuram. After a brief stint as teacher in Malappuram, he joined S.N. Polytechnic at Kottiyam, where he worked for 30 years, retiring as the Head of the Electrical Engineering Department.

He joined Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) around its inception, and was an integral part of it, serving the organization as District Secretary and President in Kollam and State General Secretary later.

Besides Gitanjali, V. K. Sasidharan, fondly known as VKS, infused euphonious tunes to numerous Malayalam poems, without compromising their artistic value or meaning, the most notable one being Poothappattu, the famous poem by Edassery Govindan Nair. It transports us to the world of Pootham, whose longing for love tugs at our heartstrings.

His musical talent did not go unnoticed by the movie industry. He composed music for Kamuki, a film by Sri. Adoor Gopalakrishnan,

which unfortunately did not see the light of the day. The songs were later included in another movie. But the glitz of the commercial movie industry did not entice him. V.K.S., choosing the less trodden path, took several generations of children along this journey, instilling a life-long interest in literature and music along with scientific rigour in them.

In the eighties, the KSSP unearthed the tradition triggered by K. Damodaran, V.T. Bhatathirippad, Thoppil Bhasi and others, in the form of Kalajatha, a series of short plays, musicals and satirical pieces, presented in street play-style. This spread across the country, and V.K.S. was the rock upon which this movement was built.

He performed all over Kerala too, inspiring many progressive and cultural organisations like Purogamana Kala Sahitya Sangham and Bala Sangham.

The octogenarian was active even in his twilight days. Though he made music a tool of social change, he always felt, as depicted in the following lines of Gitanjali: “The song I came to sing Remains unsung to this day. I have spent my days in stringing and unstringing my instrument.”

V.K.S.’s death has created a deep void in Kerala’s progressive fabric. But hundreds of his emotionally charged songs are sure to fill us with tremendous energy, and motivate us in hard times.

As clichéd as it sounds, V.K.S. will live on in our hearts, through his music and the warmth he radiated ●

Jew Street: a visual treat



Dr. Aparna Ajith
Asst. Professor in English,
S.N.C.W. Kollam



“**T**ravelling- it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller”. Ibn Battuta, the renowned Medieval traveler, and explorer has exemplified his dictum by bestowing creative wings to the adventurous roads he traversed in his life. Well! I too have created the faint footprints I have already crisscrossed during the pages and stages of my life. Some stories do serve as the guideposts to my heart as well as my amygdala. Let me take you all to one such story from my mind’s travel diary that has touched the artistic creases of my life.

The vast treasure trove of memories made me get down in front of the Jew Town at Mattancherry, the real marvel of a pulsating past and a mellifluous present! For me, it’s always the exquisite land of rarity and variety I came across in the history textbook of 10th standard; the street where culture echoes, tradition muses, attractiveness allures, heritage booms, and the astounding diversity delights. An array of musings straddles across the terrains of my sparkling experience.

On a cheerful Sunday morning, my husband, Sujeeth and I sat off our safari to Jew Town that has the serene power to tickle our nostalgic

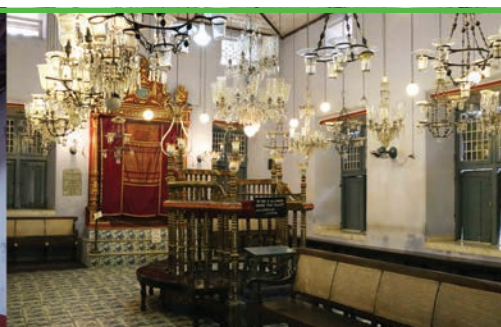
bones. To enrich the exuberance of our unplanned trip, we planned to roam around in our thunderbird the whole day. We reached the narrow street between Mattancherry Palace and the Paradesi Synagogue within no time. I was gazing unblinkingly at the bustling roads we covered from Fort Kochi to Jew Street. My shopaholic’s eyes were enthralled by the variegated combo of spices, culture, cuisine, and handicrafts. Jeeth slowed down our thunderbird from one end of the street to the other just to admire the microcosm of the universe vibrant at Mattancherry. While Jeeth was parking vehicle nearby Mattancherry Palace temple,

a young guy, probably a local guide approached me asking whether I have roamed around the street or whether I needed his help. I did not feel like disappointing his smiling face and asked whether he can enlighten me with the history of Jew Street. Jeeth joined by then and Vivin, our young guide started his narration. “I feel Sir and Ma’am are new to our Jew town. So, let me first introduce our iconic locale, Mattancherry to you – The Hebrew word mattan alludes to donation, and cherry in Malayalam means settlement. Hence, the name ‘Mattancherry’, is related to the donation of land by the King of Kochi to the Jews. It is even said that the street was full of mutton butchers. The entire street will tell you the tales of Mattancherry, the most vibrant spot in Kochi where tradition and culture roll unchecked. This was the major centre for Jews who came here on ships for trade and settled in. Today, the total number of Jews who live here is a handful”. Out of exhilaration, I asked – “Vivin, Where’s Sarah’s Aunt’s Embroidery shop? He informed me that it’s on the other side of the street. Although the Jewish community of Mattancherry lost its oldest member, how can one I forget the ever-smiling face and the friendly gestures with which she entertained all the visitors of the Jew Street? After spending an hour strolling around the lively street of antiques, handicrafts, handmade toys, floral orals, chandeliers, curios, tribal art, spices, embroidered and stylish clothing, we bid adieu to Vivin and entered the Paradesi Synagogue (foreigner

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The Paradesi Synagogue



Inside the Paradesi Synagogue

The Mattancherry Palace Temple and the Paradesi Synagogue share a common wall. Jew Town has now turned out to be a melting pot coastal reserve where diverse cultures, beliefs, customs, and faiths sprawl together in unison.

aka Jewish Synagogue, the oldest functioning Jewish house of prayer. The Synagogue built-in 1568 has Hebrew inscriptions dating back to the 14th century. The painting gallery at the entrance illustrates the history of Jews in Kerala from the time of King Solomon. I was completely mesmerized by the clock tower that was added to the Synagogue in 1760. The faces of the clock showed time in Malayalam, writings in Hebrew, etchings in Roman numerals. The Synagogue built adjacent to the Mattancherry Palace Temple was on the land gifted by King Rama Varma, the ruler of Kochi. We proceeded our journey to Dutch Palace, now a museum displaying the paraphernalia possessed by the rulers of Kochi. We were captivated for more than an hour looking at the awe-inspiring architecture that is a blend of colonial and Kerala styles. I was a bit disappointed as photography was strictly prohibited inside the palace. To my great relief, we bought a sort of fan from one of the vendors selling near its entrance; the living memory of our palace visit. I noticed one thing: The Mattancherry Palace Temple and the Paradesi Synagogue share a common

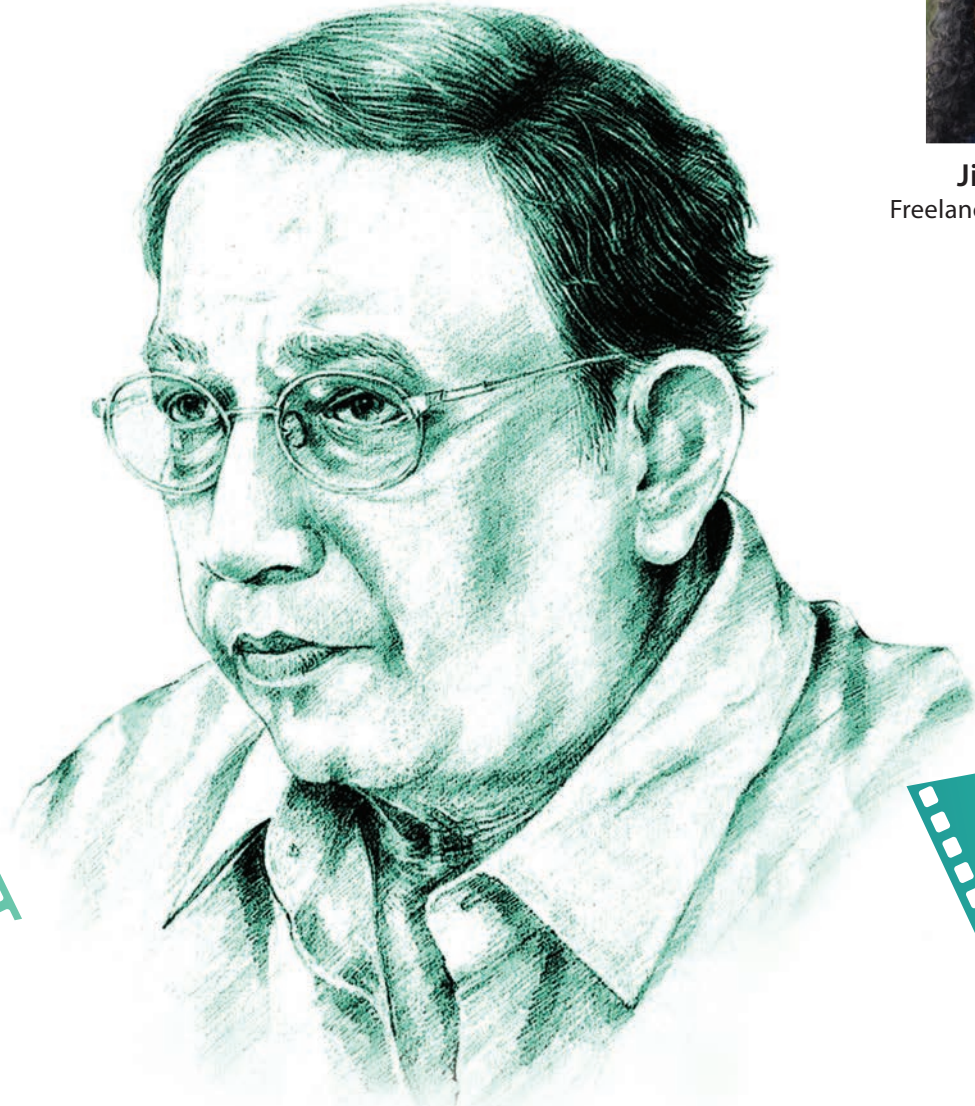
wall. Jew Town has now turned out to be a melting pot coastal reserve where diverse cultures, beliefs, customs, and faiths sprawl together in unison. Hours passed within a wink and Jeeth reminded me to keep a check on time. I reminded him of Sarah Aunty’s Embroidery Shop, the last one to see at the Synagogue lane. Table clothes, Children’s dresses, and Kippa – everything speaks of the rich heritage and history of the Jewish community. Above all, I could feel the aura of Sarah Aunty in, around, and within her shop. It’s owned by her adopted son, Thaha Ibrahim who took care of her after her husband’s death for almost twenty years. My long conversation with Thaha uncle still takes me back to the days of the Jewish community although they are dwindling in number. He told me once: Even now the visitors of Jew Town come to Sarah Aunty’s shop. They are curious to know a lot about Sarah Aunty, her life, love marriage, Jewish history, life style etc. Just like the way you talked to me and asked me about Sarah Aunty, many do”. I was so touched by Thaha uncle’s words. More than five hours had gone and nothing had gone into our starving stomachs. Jeeth suggested proceeding to Ginger House Restaurant, the antique-filled Indian restaurant with a patio overlooking the Kerala backwaters. The creamy- cashew paneer curry of this waterfront restaurant made our day. The renowned Indian author, Anita Nair once said “Wherever you go becomes a part of you somehow”. A part of the Jew Street remains in me like the image of Sarah Aunty imprinted in my mind ●

Venu's Characters are iconic: Shaji N Karun

Shaji N. Karun on Nedumudi Venu



Jisha Surya
Freelance Journalist



It was through Shaji N. Karun's lens that Malayalam film Lovers first saw Nedumudi Venu. The renowned cinematographer turned director says that the nuances in acting Nedumudi Venu portrayed through his characters are unforgettable.



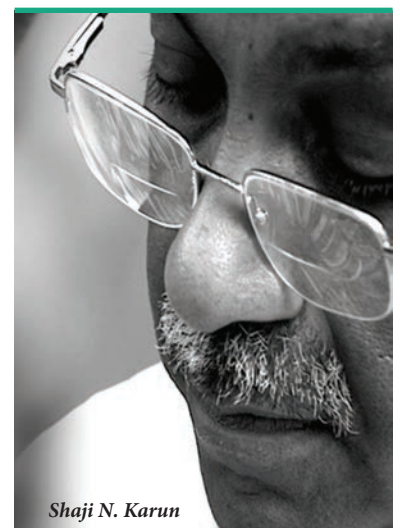
It was one of the iconic scenes of the 1978-released film *Thampu*. The character played by Nedumudi Venu was lying under a banyan tree in front of the Thirunavaya temple, enjoying the soothing Sopanam by Njeralathu Rama Poduval. Giving direction to the debutant to close his eyes, cinematographer Shaji N Karun and director Aravindan set the camera from a distance. They finished the shoot within minutes and left the place, leaving an

According to Shaji, Venu was a real master of theatre. “In theatre, the director has no role once the performance begins. The actor has to turn into a director. Venu had that advantage, which he proved through his performances in plays such as ‘Avanavan Kadamba’

unsuspecting Venu at the location. When Venu furiously returned after a long 1.5 hours, the crew couldn't stop laughing at his plight.

“Venu couldn't fully express his anger as we were all very close to him,” said cinematographer-filmmaker Shaji N Karun. It was through Shaji's lens that the Malayalam film lovers first saw Nedumudi Venu. Shaji remembered Venu as a person who could never hurt anyone. Shaji's association with Venu dates back to 1975-76 when stalwarts of Malayalam cinema would meet at hotel Nikunjam in Thiruvananthapuram. “1977-1985 was the golden period of Malayalam cinema. At that time, Nikunjam was the favourite hangout place for people like Kavalam Narayana Panicker, AyyappaPaniker, Aravindan, Bharathan and many more. Venu,

who was a journalist at Kerala Kaumudi, would come there. It was a time when films would be made on a shoestring budget. So like-minded people would support the shoot in every way possible. Likewise, Venu joined the set of *Thampu* not just as an actor, but to support the film crew,” he said.



Shaji N. Karun



Considering his penchant to do 'older roles', Shaji remembered that they used to call him 'Ammavan'. "Among our circle of friends, nobody knew him by the name. He was 'Ammavan' to us. Venu seemed to have enjoyed doing characters who are 20-22 years elder to him. He used to say that he

had closely observed peculiarities of such characters at his native place 'Kuttanad'. Filmmakers too were looking for actors who could give a break from the style followed by the senior actors. That gave more opportunities for Venu, who excelled in such roles," said Shaji. Much before

the 'Caravan' culture entered the film industry, sets were jovial with the impromptu performances by artists like Venu. Shaji remembered one such incident at the set of "Enikku Vishakkunnu", directed by P. Bhaskaran and co-produced by Jaya-Vijaya brothers, all having strong musical backgrounds. Undoubtedly, the evenings were a musical treat. "One such moment, Venu challenged Bhaskaran for percussion. Jaya-Vijaya managed to bring a copper pot for Venu from a neighbour. By the time the percussion ended, the pot was so out of shape that they had no idea how to return it to the owner," Shaji said.

Despite having a long period of association, Venu had nursed a grudge as he was never given a role in films directed by Shaji. After Thampu, Shaji and Venu worked together in several movies like 'Mangalam Nerunnu', 'Nakhakshathangal', 'Enikku Vishakkunnu' etc. Still, Venu has never appeared in the movies directed by Shaji, who has always given prominent roles to newcomers in his films. "Characters in films like Vanaprastham would have suited Venu. He might have expected a role. However, I wanted to cast real Kathakali artists as part of documenting their work. Moreover, I didn't find any difference as I have associated closely with him in several films like 'Nakhakshathangal' and 'Sargam' as a cinematographer. There was another reason for his displeasure. After committing, I had to quit his directorial film 'Pooram' as I had to rejoin KSFDC," he said. Though the actor never hid his feeling, the duo always shared a strong bond.

According to Shaji, Venu was a



real master of theatre. “In theatre, the director has no role once the performance begins. The actor has to turn into a director. Venu had that advantage, which he proved through his performances in plays such as ‘Avanavan Kadamba’”.

When Shaji met Venu for the last time during a shooting at Tagore theatre, he was sitting away from the crowd, a stark contrast from his youthful days. “With his makeup

on, I mistook him as a gatekeeper. It took a while for me to recognise him. I think he stayed away from the crowd due to his ill health. When I asked, he replied that he sat there to get some fresh air. Our last phone conversation was when he called to inform us of his son’s marriage,” Shaji said. Shaji remembers Venu as a complete artist, who, to design his house ‘Thampu’, choose an artist M V Devan – instead of an architect.

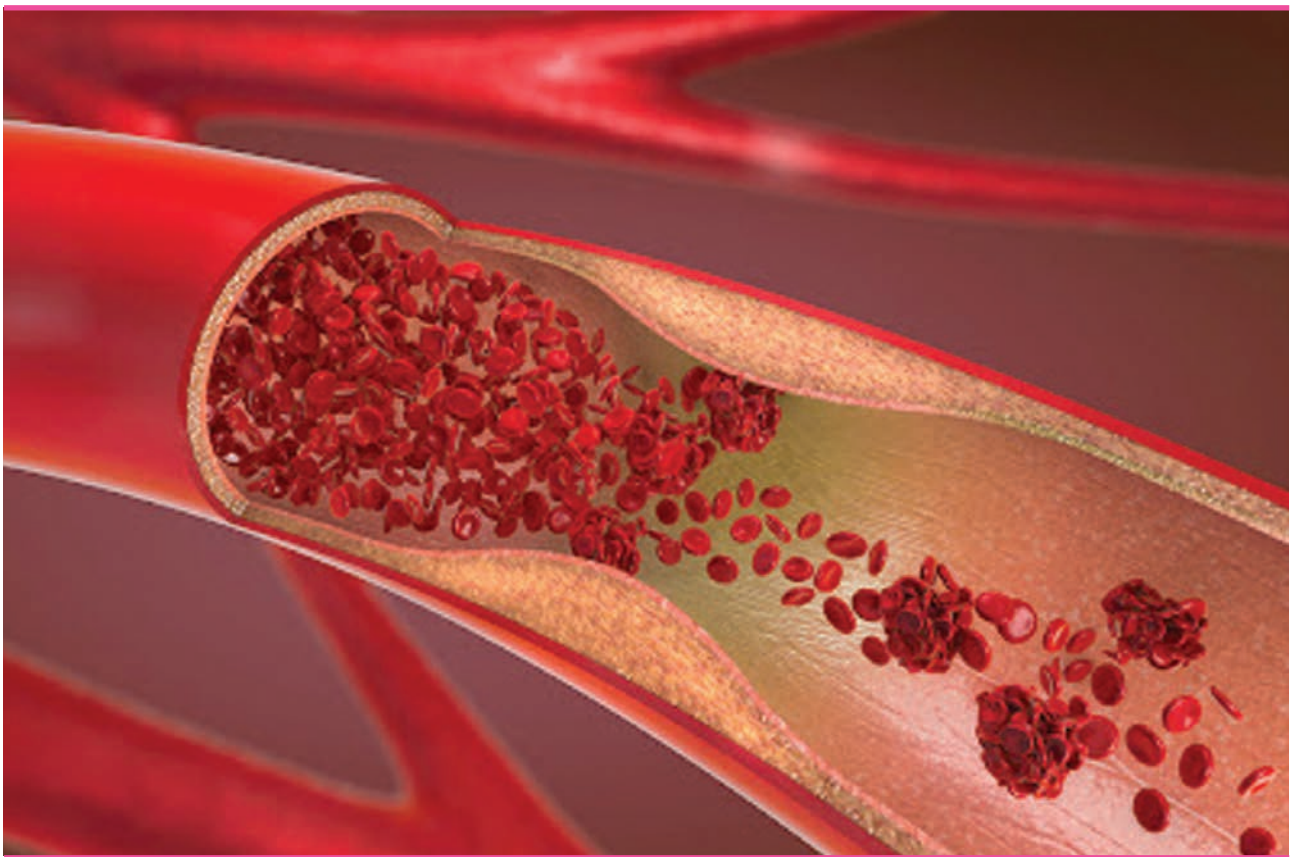
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“He departed after giving great contributions to Malayalam films. His strong presence could not be erased from Malayalam cinema,” Shaji summed up ●

Thrombosis: the silent killer



Dr. Anju Angel Alex
Department of
Health services



An awareness regarding thrombosis and the wide range of symptoms it can cause, assumes more importance in COVID-19 scenario

It was the penultimate day of 47-year-old Denson's home isolation when he developed a sudden pain in his chest at 8.30 am. Grudgingly he went ahead and got the ECG taken to meet his doctor in the Primary Health Centre just as she had asked him to.

He was not very convinced about the necessity of having to travel all the way to GH Ernakulam from his village Elankunnapuzha and yet he played along because the PHC had already arranged an ambulance. Denson (name changed to conceal identity), a father of three little girls thus spent the next couple of days in the cardiac ICU. But he survived a myocardial ischaemia.

When 54 year old Prabha visited the 'Post Covid Clinic', she told the doctor about a persisting pain in her legs. But instead of brushing it off

and attributing it to her Rheumatoid Arthritis, her physician advised a D Dimer testing that showed a value of 2.15 which was well above the cut off value of 0.5 micrograms per ml. After 2 weeks of therapy that included anti coagulant medications, she was back on her feet, literally and figuratively. Her D Dimer returned to normal. "Symptoms such as chest pain, headache, loss of consciousness, pain in legs should not be ignored in the post covid setting because we might be dealing with a thrombosis." says Dr Anu C

Kochukunju, Senior Consultant Physician of GMTH Karuvilipady Ernakulam” who treated Prabha. “D dimer, a fibrin degradation product is a small protein fragment present in the blood after a blood clot is degraded by fibrinolysis”, she goes on to explain,”and its elevation implies that there is a clot which has to be dealt with without delay”.

An awareness regarding thrombosis and the wide range of symptoms it can cause, assumes more importance in COVID-19 where apart from the usual arterial and venous thrombosis there is the added risk of immunologically mediated thrombosis which need not present as a classic one sided limb swelling .A high index of suspicion on the care giver’s part and health –seeking behaviour directed awareness on the patients’s part is the key. Like 64 year old Raghavan who decided to visit his ophthalmologist in Taluq Hospital Harippad for complaints of defective vision. ” As he was a person in the post covid period I was not surprised to detect a Central Retinal Vein Occlusion. Says Dr Rosmy.“Prognosis can be either way. Sometimes it improves;at times it does not. But getting the right diagnosis gives a patient the chance of getting appropriate treatment and”she adds.

When the World Thrombosis Day was founded in 2014, little would have anyone known that five years later this phenomenon would touch new levels of notoriety.”The immunologically mediated thrombosis in Covid 19 is different in that, there is no major bleeding per se here. Symptoms are more along the lines of Acute Lung

Never before has the birthday of Rudolph Virchow, regarded as Father of Modern Pathology has had more relevance than today when there is a pandemic that has been wreaking havoc weaponizing the thrombus.



Symptoms are more along the lines of Acute Lung Injury,like wheezing,shortness of breath,and drop in saturation.

Injury,like wheezing,shortness of breath,and drop in saturation. There is no decrease in platelet counts to begin with.”, says Dr Jyotsna,a Pathologist in GH Aluva,Ernakulam.”Hence tests like Prothrombin Time will not pick it. You need to do a D Dimer”, she says, reiterating Dr Anu’s words who is also quick to remind us that “it is imperative that the COVID

patient is ambulant and does not stay continuously in bed for so long that he ends up getting a thrombus in his vein or still worse ,a thromboembolism”, meaning a thrombus that moves about and causes symptoms and damage, based on the vessel and its location.

Never before has the birthday of Rudolph Virchow, regarded as Father of Modern Pathology has had more relevance than today when there is a pandemic that has been wreaking havoc weaponizing the thrombus. Let us be aware of its implications so that we tide over it minus much of a struggle! ●

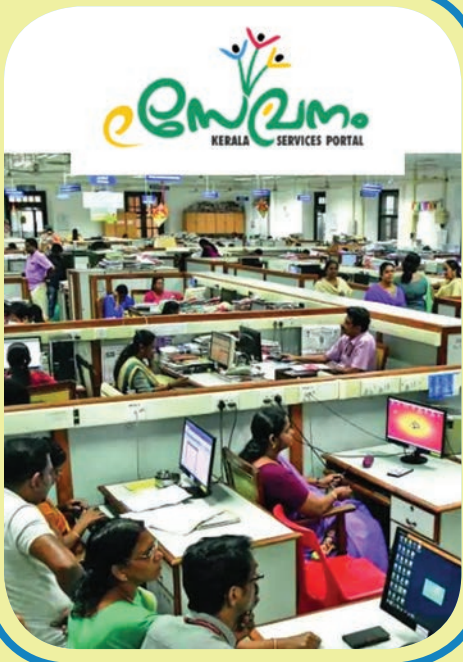
E-Sevanam & M-Sevanam for hassle-free Government Services

The government has launched e-sevanam portal for accessing services of various government departments. More than 500 services of various departments will be available through the e-sevanam portal in the first phase. The portal is providing services based on two categories viz departmental service and consumer services. The services included in the e-portal are classified into nine categories such as farmers, students, women's, children, youth, skill development, social security, pension, public utilities and others.

Apart from this, services of other departments are available in alphabetical order also. So much so that the public can easily access the services of e-sevanam portal with a click.

The government has also launched m-sevanam, a mobile application rendering other 450 government services. This application will be available in iOS and android versions. With the launch of these e-portal services, the public can access the service without going to government offices. This will be a helping hand for the public in the covid situation as these services help to avoid unnecessary crowds in the government offices and the public can access the services of government departments in a hassle-free manner.

The government has renovated the web portal of the Kerala government also. A service dashboard has also been developed for the public to get an idea about the services provided by various departments online. A document depository portal is also developed to avail government orders, tenders, announcements, circulars, notifications etc in a single platform.



No More Fees for Government Services

The government's decision to exempt fees for government services except for business and commerce purposes is a major relief to the citizens of the State. Along with the decision of fee exemption, the government decided to make the application forms more comprehensible and to simplify the procedures. The government under the Chief Minister also decided to simplify the procedures for granting various certificates and services to the public. In addition to the steps taken to make government services online, the procedures for sanctioning applications will make easier. By exempting the fees for the government services and by making the government services hassle-free via online mode, the government is bringing a paradigm shift in the administrative service of the state.



For the last one and half years, we came to know about the world only through the means of newspapers, television, and phones. The decision to open the schools is a welcoming one and I am happy about this.

Sreega Ganesh

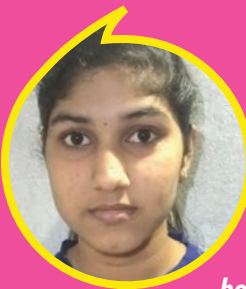
Shenoy Memorial Government Higher Secondary School Payyanur



I wish to go to school. For the last one and a half years, I miss my teachers and friends. I'm very much thrilled and waiting for the day of reopening.

Nabaan

IMUPS, Azhikode



I also wish to open the school. I am fed up with online classes inside our home. As school opens I can clear the doubts in Physics and Maths directly to the teachers. This will make classes more lively.

Avani P.V.

IMNS GHSS, Mayyil



Back to School



The cleaning activities of the school and its premises have already been done twice under the leadership of school authorities, voluntary organizations and the NSS volunteers. The teachers have already received two doses of the vaccine. With the help of local self-government institutions and voluntary organizations, thermal scanners, sanitisers and other precautions will be arranged, and everything will be scheduled according to the government guidelines.

Apart from that, medical aid facilities will be given to the students, if any health issues occur inside the school campus. As this is a Lower Primary school, biscuits and milk will be provided to students in the morning itself. Online meetings of teachers, ward councillors and doctors will be conducted to create awareness about the school reopening to the parents.

P.S. Surendran

Headmaster, GLP, School, Sulthanpetta

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