

to Top-Gear

MISSION 676



THE TIMELINE



Kochi Metro
To commence on 31 December 2015.



Vizhinjam Seaport
Project partner to be finalized by August 2014.



Kannur Airport
Laying of foundation-stone of terminal on 5 July 2014; touchdown of maiden flight on 31 December 2015.



Smart City
Opening of 6.5 lakh sq ft building on 25 March 2015.



National Waterway 3
Kollam-Kottappuram National Waterway to be commissioned in 2014.



Suburban Rail
Follow-up works based on detailed project report to begin this year itself.



Development of Roads, including National Highways
Work on By-Passes; Four-Lane Roads and National Highways progressing in time-bound manner.



Student Entrepreneurship Programme
2000 start-ups before 28 Feb 2016; Employment to 20,000 and Building of 2 lakh sq ft.

30 welfare and development projects, supervised directly by ministers, plus projects of other departments.

- Planning Commission to come up with projects for the effective implementation of Annual Projects.
- Five-pronged approach under the Chief Secretary for making government services quick and efficient:

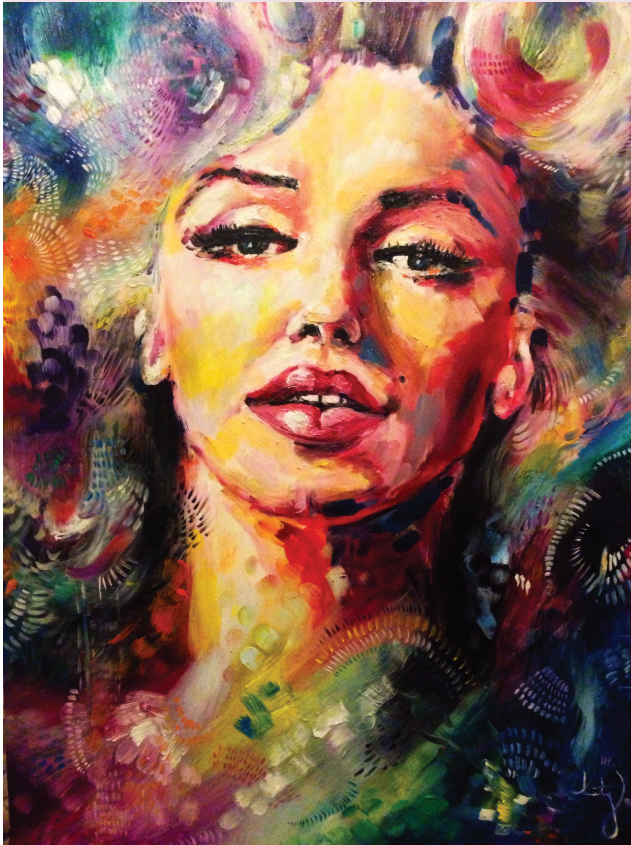
1. Right to Services
2. e Governance
3. Disposal of Pending Files
4. Right to Hearing
5. Simplifying of Administrative and Financial Procedures

MISSION 676



Kerala moving forward

COVER STORY



Kerala women have broken the glass ceiling in many spheres such as the administrative service, medicine, engineering, law, journalism... The list is long. Today there are laws and platforms through which they can redress their grievances including the discrimination they suffer at the workplace and even the violence they are subjected to, in the confines of the home.

22 Kerala women and gender equality

Maleeha Raghaviah

26 On Sexual Harassment Laws

Dr. Prameela Devi

OBSERVANCES

14 Language itself is culture

Khyrunnisa A

All languages are equal; there's no question of some languages being more equal than others. International Mother Language Day is observed to bring this truth home to us. Nelson Mandela's words beautifully sum up the importance of the native language: 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.'



30 LITERATURE

Sylvia Plath
Poetess of
Feminine Grace

Rajesh C Bose



NATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL



42 A Classical Visual Treat

Dr. Raja Varier

46 INTERVIEW
'Stop Killing People...'

Binu B



Tearful Adieu

I&PRD pays homage to Hon. Speaker



18 FULL TEXT
Governor's
Address

FEATURE

Whether Nirbhaya incident could make any behaviour change in Kerala is a question with less positive answer. But it created a social awakening among the civil society. Unless the state has an effective policy to support women and to change the attitude of citizens we cannot achieve the status of a modern state in the international level. The Nirbhaya project in Kerala meant for it.



32

Nirbhaya
Converging
Minds and
Mentality

Sini K Thomas

8 Newscan
48 Gardening



10

MEMOIR

G K:
A leader of
admirable poise

C Gouridasan Nair





KERALA CALLING

March 2015 | Volume 35 | Number 5

www.kerala.gov.in/publications.html

Responses may be sent to

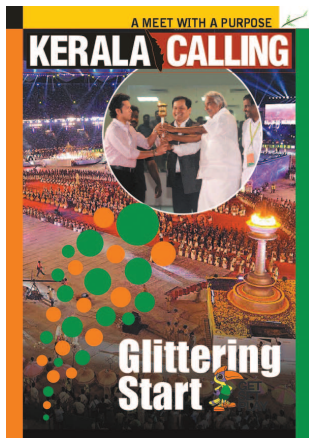
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Subscription: 0471-2517036



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PRINTING Orange Printers Private Ltd.

Representatives:

New Delhi Dr. C Venugopal

Thiruvananthapuram M Nafih

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Pathanamthitta N Radhakrishna Pillai

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Kannur E V Sugathan

Kasaragod K T Sekharan

Total no. of pages 48 + Covers

EDITORIAL MATERIALS

Articles/features appearing in this magazine are either commissioned or assigned. Nevertheless, other articles are also welcome. A maximum of 750 wordage is appreciated. Such items should be addressed to

The Editor

Kerala Calling

First Floor

Secretariat Annexe

Thiruvananthapuram

PIN 695 001

These may also be e mailed to

keralacalling@gmail.com

FOCUS

Addressing the Cause



Chief Minister Oommen Chandy with the Variyam-Uriyampetti colony residents

SUBSCRIPTION Payment for subscription can be made by Money Order addressed to **the Director, Information and Public Relations Department, First Floor, Secretariat Annexe, Thiruvananthapuram, PIN- 695 001 .**

The subscription amount in cash is received at Information and Public Relations Department, First Floor, Secretariat Annexe, Thiruvananthapuram, PH: 2517036

● State Information Centre, Press Club Building, **Thiruvananthapuram,** Ph: 2518471

● District Information Office, Civil Station, Kudappanakkunnu, **Thiruvananthapuram,** Ph: 2731300

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EDITORIAL

Serving the people with care

Honourable Governor P Sathasivam's address on the first session of Kerala Legislative Assembly for the year 2015 showcased the achievements of the Government and the future tasks that it proposes to carry out. Throughout his speech Governor outlined the motto of the Government: "Development and Care."

From winning the UN Award for public service in 2013 for the CM Jana Samparka Paripadi to the recent McKinsey report on India's Economic Geography in 2025 which depicted the state as one of the top eight high performing states based on the GDP, per capita income, productivity of workers, literacy and electrified households, outlined the achievements of the government.

Another feather on the state government's cap was the recent CSI Nihilent E-Governance Award 2013-14 for exemplary performance in e-governance applications in various departments. Promoting e- literacy, ensure high mobile penetration and service delivery through Akshaya centres Kerala will emerge as the first Digital State in the country.

Among flagship programmes Kochi Smart City which was dormant for five years has been successfully revived, Kannur airport, Vizhinjam seaport, Kochi metro are on track. Start Up village and Student Entrepreneurship Programme are models before the country.

Our mother tongue Malayalam received the Shrestha Bhasha status during this period. The government has consistently strived for making the state investor friendly. On the occasion of International Women's Day, it is worthwhile to recollect the major initiatives taken by the government. Prevention of crime against women is one of the priority areas. Nirbhaya Keralam Surakshita Keralam is a comprehensive scheme launched a year ago to ensure safety and protection of women. Now the project is being implemented in two phases covering all 14 districts.

Free text books to all girl students of plus one and plus two classes in the state under "Her Education is Our Responsibility" project and the women friendly programmes like She Taxi, She Toilet, Gender Parks and Vanitha Rathnam Puruskaram have already drawn national attention. Clearly the government is marching ahead successfully providing succour to various sections of society with focus on social justice, gender justice and over all development of the state and its people.

The untimely demise of speaker G.Karthikeyan has come as abig shock for everyone. His contribution to the state will always be remembered fondly. Kerala Calling pays heart felt tribute to him.

Mini Antony IAS
Editor in Chief



Cabotage relaxation to Vizhinjam Project

Union Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari has given his assurance that the Vizhinjam container transshipment terminal project would be granted cabotage relaxation, said Chief Minister Oommen Chandy after meeting the Union Minister. "The cabotage relaxation for Vizhinjam will be similar to the one granted to the Vallarpadom ICTT project. The 6,700-crore Vizhinjam project had failed to attract investors and the Adani Group, one of five shortlisted firms/consortiums, had attributed its reluctance to the absence of cabotage exemption," said the

Chief Minister, who was accompanied by Minister for Ports K Babu.

The Chief Minister met various other members of the Union Cabinet including External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Urban Development Minister Venkaiah Naidu. The Chief Minister requested Sushma Swaraj to effect the evacuation of around 80 nurses from the state who are stranded in war-torn Libya. He also handed over details of 29 of the nurses along with their passport numbers. The state government had received information regarding the plight

of the nurses via an e-mail on February 26.

Construction of coaches for the Kochi Metro will begin in Andhra Pradesh on March 21 under the 'Make in India' initiative, added the Chief Minister. In separate memorandums, the Chief Minister urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley to bring about a policy change for more Central funding in fisheries and 100 per cent sponsorship of fisheries development projects for the social upliftment of fishermen.

'Karuthal 2015' from 20th April

The fourth edition of Mass Contact Programme, which has been renamed as 'Karuthal 2015' will begin from 20th April. The programme will begin from the capital city and conclude in Kottayam. "We have decided to launch the mass contact programme immediately after the Assembly session. This time the Jana Samparka Paripadi has been renamed as Karuthal 2015," said the Chief Minister.

The mass contact programme at different districts will be as follows. Thiruvananthapuram (April 20), Ernakulam (April 23), Kozhikode (April 27), Pathanamthitta (April 30), Wayanad (May 4), Kollam (May 11), Kasargod (May 14), Malappuram (May 18), Alappuzha (May 21), Palakkad (May 25), Idukki (May 28), Thrissur (June 4), Kannur (June 8) and Kottayam (June 11).

Ayurveda College to be Centre of Excellence

The Government Ayurveda College will be developed into a Centre of Excellence, said Chief Minister Oommen Chandy while inaugurating the new seven-storey ward at the college. "The college, which has a 125-year-old heritage, is the oldest Ayurveda college in the state and one of the oldest in the country. When we proposed to the Central Government to develop this into a Centre of Excellence, the Centre asked us to find 10,000 acres of land for the project. In principle, they have agreed to the project," the Chief Minister said.

The construction of the pay ward is a significant step forward for the Government Ayurveda College. It would create more room for patients facing financial difficulties in the general ward, as some of them could afford to get admitted to the pay ward. Around Rs 5.75 crore was spent on the construction of the ward, which has 72 rooms and a capacity of 425 beds, added the Chief



Minister. Health Minister V S Sivakumar, who presided over the function, said that the state would soon have its own Ayush Department.

The Minister said that the government gives utmost importance to the systems of ayurveda, yoga and naturapathy,

unani, siddha and homoeopathy. 343 posts were created for the newly started ayurvedic dispensaries in the state. The department would lay the foundation stone for yet another pay ward at Poojappura Panchakarma Hospital, added the Minister.

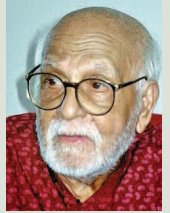
Kerala Tourism marks its presence at Berlin Fair

Kerala tourism has marked its presence at the Internationale Tourismus-Börse Berlin (ITB Berlin)-2015, the world's largest tourism trade fair. The 128 square metre pavilion of Kerala tourism is the biggest among the state tourism boards from India. "We are sure that Kerala tourism will be raised to a higher platform at this fair. We had won the 'Golden City Gate' award at ITB Berlin in 2014 for the print campaign on backwaters, which was a great boost to the tourism industry," Tourism Minister A P Anil Kumar said.

OBITUARY

A Vincent

Veteran vinematographer-director A Vincent, 88, passed away. He is survived by wife Margaret and sons, popular cinematographers Jayan Vincent and Ajayan Vincent. Sabu Cyril, the national award winning art director is his nephew.



Aloysius Vincent, fondly addressed by the film fraternity as 'Vincent Master,' won the prestigious J C Daniel Award for his contributions to Indian cinema. He received the first lessons of photography from his father, a still-photographer. Vincent ventured into cinematography at the age of 19. His first independent venture was the Telugu film 'Braduku Theruvu' in 1953. He ventured into Malayalam movies with Ramu Karyat's movie Neelakuyil in 1954. He turned a director with the landmark Malayalam film 'Bhargavi Nilayam' in 1964. The popular movies Murappennu, Nadhi, Asuravithu, Thulabharam, Nakhngal etc were directed by him. He worked as cinematographer in over 150 films, the last being 1997 Telugu film 'Annamayya'. His last film as a director was 'Kochuthemmedi.'

Ninan Koshy

Ninan Koshy, 81, theologian and expert in international affairs passed away. He is survived by wife Susan and children Shiny, Niny and Elizabeth. Ninan Koshy had served as faculty member of SB College, Changanassery; CMS College, Kottayam; Marthoma College, Tiruvalla and as vice-principal of Bishop Moore College, Mavelikkara. He had also been the chairman, Kerala Education Council and a member of Kerala University Senate. He was born in Tiruvalla on 1st February, 1934. He had contested unsuccessfully to the Lok Sabha from Mavelikkara constituency. He was the author of several books.



Chief Minister Oommen Chandy launches V ikasana Samanwayam, the news bulletin brought out by I&PRD.

Sunshift Launched

'The state's future hinges on its ability to tap non-conventional energy sources', Power Minister Aryadan Mohammed said. He was speaking after launching 'Sunshift,' a new scheme of the KSEB which encourages consumers to shift to solar-powered inverters. "By 2017, our daily peak demand would touch 4,000 MW. Our present power situation does not allow us to meet such a huge demand," Aryadan said. With inverters becoming a common place household appliance, the KSEB's troubles had in fact increased, prompting it to devise the Sunshift scheme.

A conventional grid-fed inverter consumes 35 watts a day, according to KSEB chairman and managing director M Sivasankar. The KSEB has empanelled seven firms which will sell solar-powered inverters capable of



tapping solar power during day time and automatically discharging the stored power during peak evening hours, he said. The inverters cost between 43,000 and 53,000. The first 2,750 applicants will be eligible for a 5,000 subsidy funded by ANERT.

The public can purchase the solar-powered inverters from the

seven companies empanelled by the KSEB. Those who desire a subsidy should apply through the company concerned on www.kseb.in. The following are the empanelled firms. Megabyte Technologies, Thiruvananthapuram; Soura Natural Energy Solutions India Pvt Ltd, Kochi; Hykon India(P) Ltd, Thrissur; MRO-TEK Ltd, Bangalore; KELTRON; United Electrical Industries Ltd, Kollam and Igatech Industrial Electronics Pvt Ltd, Thiruvananthapuram



Coir Bhavan Inaugurated

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy has offered to assist the Coir Cooperative Societies to procure sufficient quantity of coconut husks from within the state. Inaugurating the Coir Bhavan at Nandavanam the Chief Minister said that the state required 2.25 lakh tonnes of coconut fibre while it was able to produce only 50,000 tonnes only. The coir

sector was employing over 3.75 lakh workers in the traditional sector and it was important to ensure the development of this sector for the welfare of these workforce. But the greatest challenge is the dearth of coconut husk. We have to procure it from within. So that it will reflect in the growth of the sector," the Chief Minister said.

'No Hike in Pension Age

The pension age limit for government employees will not be hiked as rumored, Chief Minister Oommen Chandy said at the post-Cabinet briefing. "No such moves will be initiated without taking the youth and their organisations into confidence. When the jobless youth in the state remain dejected, it is impossible to realise any hike in the age," the Chief Minister said.



GK

A leader of admirable poise

In the turbulence, that is power politics, political activists do not always get to ride the pearly waves under a bright sun, or remain invincible all through their life and career, leave alone succeed in keeping their public image intact. G. Karthikeyan, Speaker, who died on 7th March, was among the few leaders in contemporary Kerala who could keep his poise even when the political waters turned choppy and dark winds seemed to blow his way. A leader, who lived at the dividing line between introversion and a busy public life, one who could go beyond the terrain of humdrum politics to enjoyment of literature and cinema and display deep respect for the commoner, Karthikeyan naturally stood out among his peers, something borne out by the warmth and respect with which he was remembered by all after his passing away.

Like his peers, he cut his teeth in politics as a student and youth activist but,



unlike many in his generation, he chose the unfashionable path, that of standing by K. Karunakaran and, thus, with Indira Gandhi, during the post-Emergency days. Those were times when under the tutelage of A.K. Antony, the mass of youngsters were trying to carve a niche for themselves in the Congress movement in Kerala. They would soon move out, only to return to the parent body and take over the reigns of command. But,

He often made his stance on events, individuals and issues, in half statements, leaving his meanings clear, but never overstating his case. In the Assembly, his oft-heard reminder to the members in times of turmoil was 'please remember, the people are watching us'.

Karthikeyan stood where chose to be in the first place, with Karunakaran. He moved out of that sphere of influence during the early 1990s as a key member of the 'reformist' troika, but there was still that restraint in his words and actions.

A. K. Antony picked him to be his Power Minister in 1995-1996 and, when he returned to lead the UDF government in 2001, chose him to be his Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Culture. When the UDF came to power in 2011 under Oommen Chandy, he was chosen Speaker rather than given a weighty portfolio in



the Cabinet. That did push up a few eyebrows but, through the three-and-a-half years that he guided the Kerala Legislative Assembly, the quintessential middle roader proved that he was the best available person for the job.

Unlike many others, he did not seek out the media. Actually, he was reticent when it came to speaking his mind. He often made his stance on events, individuals and issues, in half statements, leaving his meanings clear, but never overstating his case. In the Assembly, his oft-heard reminder to the members in times of turmoil was 'please remember, the people are watching us'. Even when called upon to act firm and suspend James Mathew and T.V.Rajesh from the House on 17th July, 2014, he made it clear that he was doing so with a weighty heart, a message that went across more forcefully than the punishment itself. He had no confusion about his role as Speaker: that of ensuring that the government got to discharge its Constitutional



obligations in the House. He did not also forget his Constitutional obligation to give the Opposition its legitimate space. In a House divided by a wafer thin margin, this called for tremendous amount of patience and ability to take everybody onboard even the competing interests of the government and the Opposition seemed to pull the House apart. Karthikeyan carried credibility with both the sides to pull it off with relative ease. What was even more remarkable was that he did so without being showy.

That Karthikeyan got elected from Aryanad successively for four terms

(1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006) and a fifth time from its present avatar Aruvikkara in 2011 shows the kind of hold he came to wield among the people of his constituency. Karthikeyan did not short circuit his way to the top. The outpouring of grief in his constituency over the death of a leader so young in age, the massive turnout of people to bid him adieu as the mortal remains made its journey into the constituency, the way leaders from the rival sides of the political divide recalled the man with unmistakable fondness, all show that he could grow beyond the confines of his political office to be acceptable to a wide



swathe of people at the top rungs of society as also out there on the streets.

Born in Varkala on 20th January, 1949, he began as an ordinary KSU activist at the

Sree Narayana College, Kollam. He went on to study at the Sree Narayana College, Varkala, became an office-bearer of the Kerala University union, did the





unfashionable thing by standing alongside Karunakaran and Indira Gandhi when the Congress split in 1978, served as State president of both KSU and Youth Congress and general secretary and vice-president of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC), and did his stint as deputy of the Congress Legislature Party before becoming the Speaker of the Kerala Assembly. All these years were a time of evolution for the man, from the margins to the centre stage of fractious politics and then to a common ground where all sections of his party and the political spectrum found in him a credible point of reference.

Karthikeyan was not

another run-of-the-mill politician. He had a taste for literature and was a keen follower of cinema, though this did not mean that he was scholar in either. As some have vouched to this writer, he could hold a conversation with writers for a fair length of time. He belonged to the mainstream in his reading and enjoyment of the arts, but that did not mean that his understanding was poor for that. He could enter into a debate over the quality of a novel or a poem and was, at a very personal level, keenly observing the twists and turns of life beyond politics. And, if death had not cut his life short, Karthikeyan would have proved that Speakership was but one important stopover in a long and glorious journey in politics. ■

The writer is Chief of Bureau, The Hindu, Kerala



OBSERVANCES

■ KHYRUNNISA A



The importance of language can never be underestimated. Caliban, the half-human son of Sycorax the witch in Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest*, says angrily to Prospero, 'You taught me language; and my profit on't is, I know how to curse.' True, language might have taught him to curse, but it taught him many other things besides. It was the tool that helped him express his discontent to Prospero, it taught him to express his thoughts through charming poetry and it enabled him to talk with the other characters.

The ability to use language to communicate one's thoughts, feelings and ideas distinguishes man from other animals. Man's special ability to articulate his thoughts through language lead to much curiosity about the how language originated. Linguists came up with many theories none of which could give wholly satisfactory explanations and which were mostly based on the belief that languages were formed of words that imitated sounds in the natural world or arose out of instinctive exclamations of happiness,



**21 February
International
Mother
Language Day**

Language itself is culture

listening
understanding
talking
writing
reading

sorrow, fear, pain and so on.

By observing and studying how children learnt to speak, linguists tried to solve the mystery of the roots of language. They found that children seemed to be hardwired to learn a language. According to the well-known contemporary American author Bill Bryson, 'children seem to be programmed to learn language, just as they seem to be programmed to learn to walk.' A child is able to pick up languages with great ease during the first five years of his life. Since he is more often in the company of his parents, especially his mother, he speaks his mother's language first. A mother speaks to her child in the language that comes instinctively to her, her native language. Hence, we have the term 'mother tongue' for one's native language.

A phenomenal number of languages had existed globally to cater to the linguistic needs of specific communities and groups but gradually the number got reduced. There were many reasons for the gradual disappearance of languages. When tribes speaking the languages died out, they took knowledge of their languages with them. Sometimes linguistic groups got absorbed and a dominant language took over, snuffing out the minor languages and dialects. The fact that there were about 1000 languages in the New World when Christopher Columbus arrived, but now there are less than 600 tells the sad story of language.

When a language is no longer taught to the children of a community, the language is in danger of becoming extinct when the older



Often, class distinctions cause a language to disappear.

If a language that is used by a lower social class stigmatises its users, they try to hide their class and amalgamate with the higher class by consciously using the language of the latter. Many languages indigenous to the tribes of India have disappeared and many are facing threat of extinction because of their dwindling population of the tribes as well as because of the heavy use of the dominating languages.

According to the United Nations' report, 'more than 50 per cent of the approximately 7,000 languages spoken in the world are likely to die out within a few generations, and 96 per cent of these languages are spoken by a mere 4 per cent of the world's population. Only a few hundred languages have genuinely been given pride of place in education systems



members die. Children who do speak the language but are relocated to an area where it is not spoken very soon forget their native language and accept the language of their new surroundings. Political and military unrest also endangers a language. A successful invasion results in the native tongue being forcibly replaced by the conqueror's language and if the people of the land flee from the invaders, they often end up using the language of the adopted country and in course of time, the mother tongue is forgotten.

mother ആമ്മ

All languages are equal; there's no question of some languages being more equal than others.

International Mother Language Day is observed to bring this truth home to us. Nelson Mandela's words beautifully sum up the importance of the native language: 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.'

and the public domain, and less than a hundred are used in the digital world.' When a language dies, knowledge of the culture of its speakers, their teachings, customs, and other inherited knowledge dies too. That is an indescribably huge loss not only culturally, but also because it hampers research activity in linguistics, anthropology, history, psychology and other related subjects.

The United Nations observed this phenomenon with growing concern and in 1999 the United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) took the decision to observe an International Mother Language Day to create awareness among people of the importance of their mother tongue and to remind them people to take pride in their native languages. Through celebration of this Day, the UN aims to promote linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as multilingualism. The Day was first announced by the UN on 17th November 1999. The UN General Assembly formally recognized its observance in its resolution and established 2008 as the International Year of Languages.

21st February was chosen as the date for its observance in order to commemorate the fatal shooting down by the police of four students who, on that day in 1952 had staged a demonstration in Dhaka, presently the capital of Bangladesh, along with many other students for the recognition of their mother tongue Bangla, as one of the two national languages of what was then a united Pakistan.

Since 2000, the International Mother Language Day has been observed all over the world annually on 21 February. The UNESCO and other UN organizations arrange and take part in events and functions that encourage linguistic and cultural variety. The day is used to highlight to natives the importance of their mother language and to preserve it while also using other languages in the quest for education. Governments and NGOs initiate strategies on this day to encourage language diversity by



promoting language learning in general and mother tongue learning in particular.

International Mother Tongue Day is observed globally, but nowhere is it as specially celebrated as in Bangladesh where the Day is also known as 'The Language Martyrs' Day' and is a public holiday. People lay flowers at Shaheed Minar, a martyr's monument specially constructed to keep the memory of the four brave young language martyrs alive. Literary contests are hosted and other functions that celebrate the ethnicity of Bangladesh and the relevance of the Bengali language are organized.

February 21st of 2015 marks the celebration of the sixteenth International Mother Language Day. Every

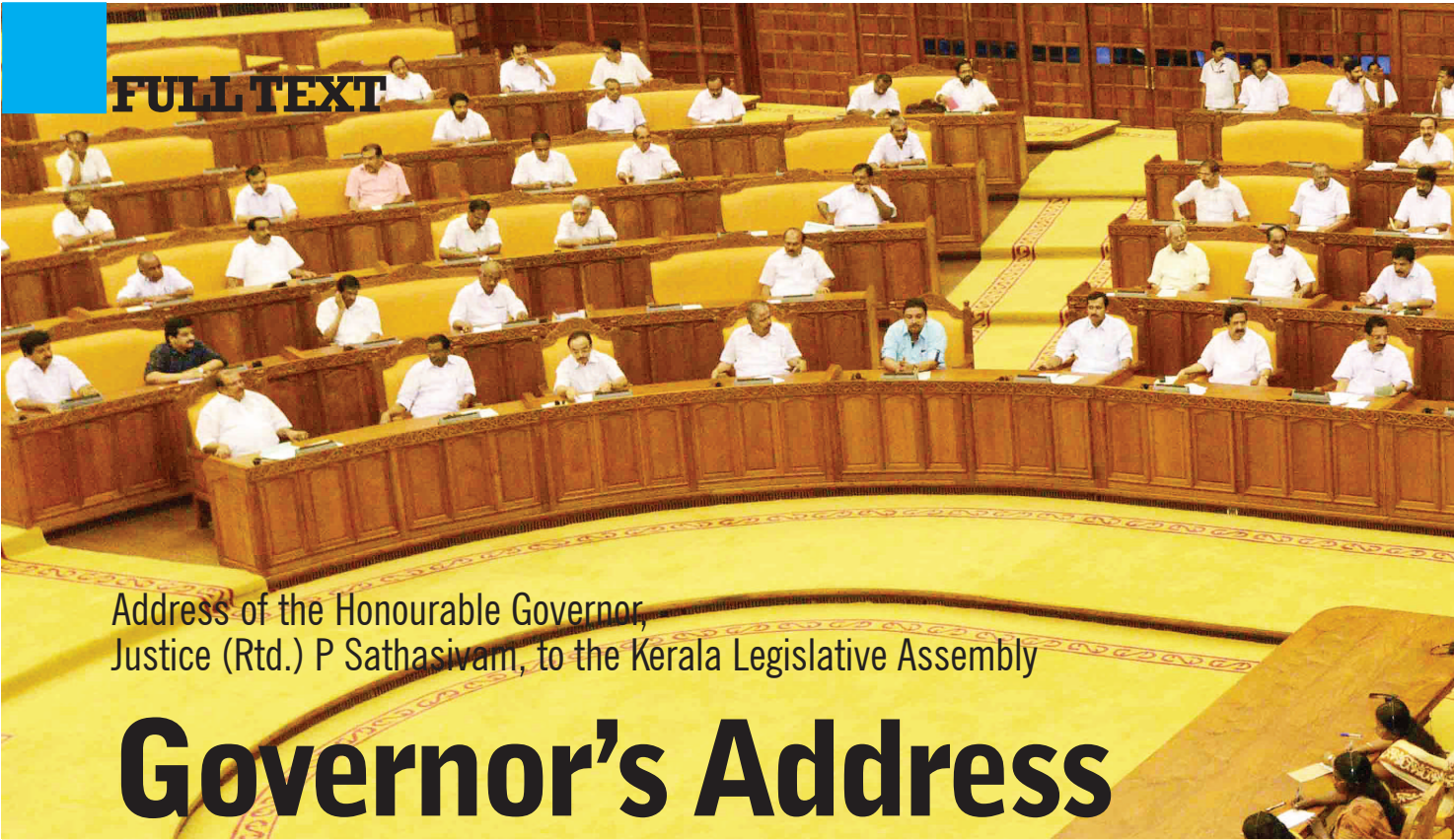
year the celebrations focus on a particular theme. The theme for 2015 is 'Inclusion in and through Education: Language Counts.' It is a very significant theme, for without linguistic inclusion there is no equal access to education. It is challenging too, for reaching out to the weaker sections of the population is very difficult. Linguistic minorities are often marginalized, with little or no access to quality education. Learners from these communities are often excluded from opportunities to pursue education because of their straitened means and often because the language of instruction is not their own.

International Mother Language Day events therefore centre around multi cultural festivals which aim to

make people conscious of the importance of the hearing of all voices and also focus on the heightened need for social cohesion, cultural awareness and tolerance. They help to establish the link between personal identity and culture through linguistic communication.

All languages are equal; there's no question of some languages being more equal than others. International Mother Language Day is observed to bring this truth home to us. Nelson Mandela's words beautifully sum up the importance of the native language: 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.' ■

The writer is Associate Prof. (Rtd.) All Saints College, Thiruvananthapuram



Address of the Honourable Governor,
Justice (Rtd.) P Sathasivam, to the Kerala Legislative Assembly

Governor's Address

Honourable Speaker, Karyavattom and my
Honourable Government has created Nine
Members, New Stadia across the State and
Ellavarkum Ente renovated 16 existing stadia with
Namaskaram new facilities by incurring an
expenditure of around Rs 213
crore.

I warmly welcome you all to the first session of the Kerala Legislative Assembly for the year 2015. This is my first address to you and let me extend my hearty greetings to all of you. I am indeed very happy to let you know that development activities undertaken by my Government have made Kerala one of the fastest growing States in the entire country. In the 35th National Games which had recently concluded, Kerala has emerged as first among the States in overall championship. This was the best National Games organized so far as per feedback received from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and sports fraternity. My Government congratulates the athletes, coaches and officials who made this National Games a grand success. As a legacy of holding the 35th National Games in Kerala, a Green Field stadium of international standards was setup at

My Government which has come into power on 18th May 2011 has declared that "development and care" is its motto. The development works undertaken in the last 45 months have transformed the State to really "Gods own country". The exponential growth rate which my Government could achieve and the much acclaimed 'Kerala Model of Development, is now attracting world attention. Even the United Nations have appreciated the Good governance initiatives of my Government. The Mass contact Programme for speedy disposal of public grievances by the chief Minister has won the UN Public Service Award 2013. The recent McKinsey report on India's Economic geography in 2025 depicts Kerala as one of the top 8 high performing States based on the Gross Domestic Product, per capita income, productivity of workers, literacy and electrified

households- My Government has won the IBN Diamond State Award for outstanding performance in the field of Education, Environment, Health and poverty Alleviation. The official web site of the Chief Minister has won the Web Ratna Award for outstanding public participation initiative. My Government has recently won the CSI Nihilent e-Governance Award 2013-14 for exemplary performance in e-Governance applications in various departments. On completion of the National Optical Fiber Network by the end of this month, spread of e-governance across the departments, achievement of e-literacy, high mobile penetration and service delivery through "Akshaya Centres" Kerala will emerge as the first Digital State in the country.

The grand vision of inclusive growth which my Government has been following has brought in economic growth with equity. The Zero Landless Programme which my Government has launched could benefit more than a lakh landless family. The Smart City Project which was

dormant for five years could be revived and the first phase is getting ready for commissioning. The Kochi Metro Rail Project is progressing very fast. The Kannur airport will be completed by May 2016. The Vizhinjam International Sea Port has got the environmental clearance and Viability Gap Funding (VGF) sanction from the Government of India and the works will be started soon. The Start-up Village at Kochi and the Student Entrepreneurship Programme which my Government has launched is a model for the rest of the country.

In the welfare side, my Government has increased all the welfare pensions to Rs. 500/- apart from ensuring its timely disposal. Pension has been granted to all dairy farmers and the pension amount has been increased. The Arogyakiran project could provide comprehensive health care to the common public. More than 25000 patients could get the benefit under Karunya Chikitsa Sahayanidhi. My Government could intervene successfully in getting the nurses released from the custody of terrorists in Iraq.



This initiative of my Government was very well appreciated by the Union Government. My Government could get "shreshta Bhasha" status to our mother tongue Malayalam. The number of Government medical colleges has been increased from 5 to 9. Nirbhaya project was started for preventing atrocities against women and children. My Government could commission the Ranni_ Perinadu and peechi power projects.

My Government could effectively intervene in the market, helping the farmers to get remunerative prices for their produce. For the first time in the country procurement of raw coconut directly from the farmers was done through the Krishi Bhavans. My Government has brought a new thrust to value addition and agro processing, apart from increasing the productivity and quality of the produce. For the first time license was given to tap 'Neera'- a non-alcoholic drink from coconut inflorescence sap by farmer-producer companies as well as Kerala Agricultural University and Kerala State

Coconut Development Corporation.

In the wake of declaration of Kerala as Organic by 2016, my Government will take all possible efforts for integrating various State and Central schemes already proposed to popularize organic farming in our State. Special quota will be reserved in undergraduate courses both in Agricultural University and Veterinary and Animal Sciences Universities for the children of farmers who have shown outstanding performance in organic farming. My Government has completed the registration of all farmers in the State. 'Smart Cards' will be issued to 18.77 lakh farmers who are enrolled under Farmers Registration Scheme.

The rapid spread of bird-flu in a couple of districts has caused heavy loss to the farmers. However, thanks to the timely intervention of all departments concerned, my Government could contain the disease in time and the farmers have been compensated adequately. In the light of the devastating outbreak of bird-flu, all efforts will be taken to rejuvenate duck

industry in Kuttanad region.

The Govardhini Scheme launched by my Government is intended to add one lakh more cattle population in the State and provide them with scientific management. My Government could develop a new farming culture through innovative programmes and schemes in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry sectors.

80 % percent of the milk requirement of Kerala is now met through internal milk production. By the end of the 12th plan , my Government is planning to achieve self sufficiency in this sector. My Government could add 3700 Hectares to the existing fodder cultivated area of 18,000 Hectares during the year 2014-2015. Around 2.37 lakh dairy farmers in the State were brought under the purview of insurance scheme of Kerala Dairy Farmers' Welfare Board.

In 2013-14 the sub sectors of forestry and fisheries recorded positive growth rates of 3.4 per cent and 5.43 per cent respectively. Special housing package will be implemented for fishermen under integrated

development of fishing village scheme to provide housing to 4000 homeless fishermen. Special drive will be undertaken to protect fish breeding sites and prevent juvenile fishing. Second phase of 'Matsya Samruthi' project will be implemented by incorporating new initiatives for enhancing aquaculture production. Cage farming of fishes in open waters and reservoirs will be promoted' My Government will ensure the timely completion of works undertaken in all fishing harbours.

My Government is the only State Government in India giving Rs.2 lakh for SC and General category and Rs.2.5 lakh to ST beneficiaries under Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) "House for the house less" is an important issue we are facing today. My Government will be giving priority to housing schemes with the help of local governments and other institutions and social organizations. My Government will be implementing "Jawahar Housing scheme" under which one house in each ward of every panchayath/ Municipality/

corporation will be constructed with the financial assistance from the Plan fund of local bodies.

Kerala has not got its due share in the Prime Minister Gram Sadak yojana (pMGsY) rural road scheme. When my Government assumed office in 2011, 303 roads having 715 kms roads were not even started. Since there were no one to take tender of roads as per the present estimate, my Government has decided to give tender excess up to 42% of the estimate and because of this, about 325 kms of road works were started of which 125 kms have been completed by now. In the 8th phase we got 1012 kms roads of which 850 km roads works have already been started. So far my Government has spent Rs.124 crore from the state fund for PMGSY. Under PMGSY phase II we have got only 570 kms roads at the estimate of Rs. 500 crore. This is quite insufficient and my Government has approached the Government of India for an additional 1000 kms roads in PMGSY.

My Government has repeatedly taken up the revision of the guidelines of centrally sponsored schemes according to the situation and requirements of the States. In Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the expenditure we incurred in 2013-14 was Rs.1700 crore, while it was only Rs.701 crore on 2010-11. But due to changes made in the schedule of works by the Government of India, my Government is finding it difficult to give job to the 29 lakh registered families. My Government has demanded inclusion of dairy, coir, khadi and other traditional industries sector in the ambit of NREGS. To consider our request, the Government of India has convened a meeting of Rural Development Ministers in southern States to discuss the issue.

Kerala State Welfare Corporation for Forward Communities was set up by my Government for carrying on the business of promoting the comprehensive development and welfare of the economically backward sections among the forward communities of Kerala. As a pilot project, the Corporation proposes to take over the renovation work of 200 Agraharas which is the traditional settlement of the ethnic Brahmin communities in Kerala.

The Kerala State Minority Development Finance Corporation and Kerala State Commission for Minorities have been set up. My Government has launched Minority e-certificate to facilitate reservation to minority students under central Government.

My Government has prepared a Perspective Plan for the state with the technical assistance of National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi. In continuation of the perspective plan 2030 document, my Government envisages preparing a vision document - Infrastructure Master plan 2030- as a more focused study to identify Infrastructure gaps in selected sectors of development and prepare a shelf of projects to bridge the identified gaps. My Government proposes to introduce a digitized documentation of the assets created in the Annual plans and upload photographs of capital Assets created to avoid the duplication of identical schemes by different agencies and enable effective targeting of scarce budgetary funds to achieve developmental outcomes.

Kerala is the first State in the country to implement the 'saankhya' the accrual based double entry software in all the Local Self Government Institutions. The web based "Sulekha" software developed by Information Kerala Mission has won CSI Award 2013-14 under

the category Sustenance. The certificates of birth, death and marriage which are registered under the Local Self Government Institutions from 1970 will be made available to the people online. The facility of online property tax payment can be availed by the property tax payers of Grama Panchayaths from 2015- 16 onwards.

Kudumbashree has started 899 new enterprises in this financial year. It would be starting Anti Human Trafficking centres in three districts of Kerala - Idukki, Palakkad and Wayanad.

An "Investors' Meet" was conducted at Kochi in February 2014 to take up various projects in Public Private Partnership [PPP] mode. Expressions of interest were received for 89 projects showcased by various Urban Local Bodies at the meet. Consequent to this, partner Kerala Mission was constituted at the state level to facilitate speedy implementation of the project.

Hostel facilities will be provided to women in urban areas. Modern multilevel parking system will be established in urban areas. Kerala Sustainable Urban Development Project will complete all the ongoing works using ADB financial assistance. Under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM), the Water Supply Scheme of Kochi having a capacity of 100 Million Litres per Day will be commissioned and 400 buses allotted to the Corporation will be operated in different Municipal areas. The e_governance project of the corporation of Kochi will be launched. The existing street lights of all Urban Local Bodies [ULBs] will be replaced by Energy Efficient LED lighting system under Nagarajyothi project. Septage Treatment plants will be constructed in all the districts in the State.

Suchitwa Mission is planning to provide sanitary

facility for all rural and urban households within a period of 3 years. State plan Fund, Local self Government Institution plan/ own funds and Swachh Bharat Mission funds shall be tapped to execute the various projects under sanitation and waste management.

A special scheme for completing "Spill - over" houses will be introduced during 2015-16 by the SC Development Department. Due to limited resource base of the beneficiaries and the escalation in the cost of construction, many houses allotted earlier are remaining unfinished. Hence a special scheme will be initiated in 2015-16 to complete the incomplete houses. Scheduled Castes Development Department has been providing encouragement and awards to SC students for outstanding performance in education and arts.

People with entrepreneurial ability belonging to Scheduled Castes need to be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities offered to start industrial units and business enterprises in industrial parks and estates. So a new scheme aimed at providing assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs will be introduced in 2015-16. Formation of Backward Communities Development Department is a major achievement of my Government. My Government is intending to implement a new housing scheme for widows belonging to BPL families and destitute.

To ensure a guaranteed floor level wages per day to all those workers who fall outside the minimum wages safety net, the Labour Department proposes to introduce the Kerala Minimum Guaranteed Wages Bill. My Government proposes to amend the state labour enactments and the state rules corresponding to central labour enactments to enable the increased participation of women in both public and private sectors of employment and to prepare the

labour force to face the challenges of post liberalization scenario.

My Government is planning to take up the new schemes/projects with the aim to improve the quality of service delivered by the Department so as to achieve the national goal of 500 million skilled persons by 2022, which will reduce unemployment. A full-fledged placement Cell in each ITI is proposed and tie ups with industrial giants are to be made for enhancing the exposure of the trainees.

Considering the fact that Kerala has one of the highest out-of-pocket expenditure for medical treatment, my Government is proposing to implement the programme 'Karunya Keralam', wherein the entire diagnostic tests in Government hospitals will be offered free of cost in a phased manner. The focus has changed now on to Primary Health Care. A strong primary Health Care will lessen the burden Health of Care in higher centers. World Health Organisation has been advocating Universal Health Coverage, which essentially means that a citizen should be able to access quality health care easily and without financial stress. My Government has conceptualized a programme that will reposition the vast network of primary care institutions such as primary health centers and community health centers as centers of comprehensive care, to operationalize Universal Health Coverage.

The need to have an efficient healthcare delivery system need not be reiterated. However, what stands in the way of efficient treatment is the unavailability of the data both at the population level and at the personal level. This data incompleteness leads to waste of resources, time and effort of medical Practitioners. Hence my Government proposes to develop a huge electronic platform for effective utilization of resources. Kerala e-



Health Programme is an ambitious programme for developing Electronic Health Records (EHR) and Electronic Medical Records (EMR) for the people of Kerala. The Kerala University of Health sciences will establish schools and centres like School of Research in Ayurveda, Centre for Disability Management Studies etc to make its functioning more effective. In the last four years, my Government has started four new Government Medical Colleges after a lapse of thirty years. This year we plan to start two more new Medical Colleges in Thiruvananthapuram and Konni. With this, 11 out of 14 districts shall have Government Medical Colleges offering advanced health care at affordable costs and medical education for poor students. My Government is happy to inform this august house that we have introduced "Sukritham" which aims at giving free cancer treatment to BPL families in eight medical institutions. My

Government also plans to introduce "subhadram" a free comprehensive cancer awareness, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation scheme for all women in Government Health Institutions.

My Government is giving utmost importance for development of tribal areas in the State. All possible measures for their education, health, employment and socio economic development will be undertaken. My Government intends to distribute 7693 Hectares of land, identified on the basis of the Honourable Supreme Court judgment, to landless tribals. My Government intends to start a new venture enabling Tribal Education from the KG to PG named "Gurukulam" as recommended by the Higher Education Council.

My Government has initiated steps for voluntary relocation of tribal farmers residing within forests by payment of adequate compensation. A new Forest

Division has been established at Kasaragod District for strengthening forest protection and ensuring smooth management.

Concerted measures have been taken to lessen the problems arising from man-animal conflict. To counter the increasing menace of wildlife attacks, an amount of Rs.9.88 crore was expended for taking up various measures to protect life and property. My Government had also accorded sanction for one elephant squad each in Wayanad and Nilambur. Further, Rs 6.44 crore had been provided as compensation for crop damage due to wildlife attacks. The rate of compensation for death due to wild life attack has been increased from Rs.3.00 lakh to Rs 5.00 lakh.

Two new Eco Tourism projects have been initiated at Konni and at shendurney. Both will be completed during the current year. The first phase of

Contd. to Page 36



Empowering Women, roadmap signed by 189 governments 20 years ago that set the agenda for realising women's rights, many serious gaps continue to remain with regard to women's empowerment.

While this is an occasion to celebrate the many achievements since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a historic

The current scenario as pictured in the UN declaration applies to Kerala too. There is an urgency to galvanize action to address

the gaps in making gender equality a reality. In the Kerala context, we cannot but note with a sense of optimism that voices of dissent had surfaced time and again to underline the lower position women occupied in society, and the demand for a change in the existing gender pattern. There have been remonstrations in the form of

literature and theatre, in addition to progressive movements demanding a legitimate space for women in the social hierarchy. Here we need to focus not only on the equation of equality in the familial, economic and societal spheres but also to what extent the home, the workplace and the society provided women a space of



Kerala women and gender equality

Poet Kumaran Asan, and novelists and short story writers such as Uroob, Vaikom Mohammed Basheer, and Kamala Das (Suraiyya) wielded their pen to support the cause of women's rights and the need to position them in an equitable niche.



safety and protection.

Demands for gender equality

Looking back, in Kerala, from the turn of the 20th Century, many have been the voices of opposition that emerged and demanded a rightful freedom for women – impassioned outcries that advocated for healthier gender equations. New role

models emerged in novels and plays to inspire women to seek a rightful role in the society. O. Chandu Menon's novel *Indulekha* was one such earliest forms of remonstrations, a path-breaking piece of writing that sought to highlight the fact that literacy of women, especially modern education would go a long way to

challenge the shackles of patriarchy. Bhattathiripad's epoch-making play *Adukalayil Ninnu Arangathekku* (From hearth to public space), is another such early protest of anguish that set society thinking of the bias and discrimination women in the upper strata of society suffered. It was a clarion call

to enable women to discover their innate abilities and talents and not be confined to the four walls of the household to perform traditional roles. Writers including women from distinctive communities including the Nambudiri community such as *Lalithambika Antharjanam* had set the tone for such



with a great sense of pride that the State can showcase its excellent social parameters such as the creditable female-male ratio, low maternal and child mortality rate, high female literacy and the like. But there are undercurrents that mar this rosy picture and glaring paradoxes. Despite the laws and legislations, violence and harassment of women including rape have registered

change however, there was a fall in the number of cases of eve-teasing last year when compared to earlier statistics.

Legislation

The lately enacted Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act is another legislation that exists with the objective of providing a safe environment for women in their workplace. The law

in the confines of the home.

dissent. Her novel Agnisakshi stands as a flash point in literature for initiating discussion and debate of the urgency to accord an enhanced status for Nambudiri women who were subjected to a life of isolation and desolation.

Poet Kumaran Asan, and novelists and short story writers such as Uroob, Vaikom Mohammed Basheer, and Kamala Das (Suraiyya) wielded their pen to support the cause of women's rights and the need to position them in an equitable niche. One may also add to the list contemporary writers like Khadeeja Mumtaz, Gracy, and others who through their writings showcase sensitivity to women's anguish in being denied a just existence.

Women professionals on the rise

For women of contemporary Kerala it has been a long march from the confines of the home to the public space. Kerala women have broken the glass ceiling in many spheres such as the administrative service, medicine, engineering, law, journalism..... The list is long. Today there are laws and platforms through which they can redress their grievances including the discrimination they suffer at the workplace and even the violence they are subjected to,

Innumerable Government and Non Government organisations now exist to sensitise Kerala women on their rights and the mechanisms available to redress their grievances. They are today, as never before, conscious of their rights, and have attained the courage to protest and seek redressal for the injustice they suffer.

Kerala was one of the first States in the country to set up the State Women's Commission as early as 1993 with poet-women's right activist B. Sugatha Kumari as the Chairperson. The Commission despite being only a recommendatory forum has been a successful platform for women to air their grievances. They have been able to redress their complaints especially marital discords through the Women's panel. Various NGOs such as the Kozhikode-based Anweshi and Nisa Progressive Muslim Women's Forum have also played a proactive role in sensitizing women.

It is definitely not easy to gauge the parameters of the concept of gender equality that prevails in contemporary Kerala society. On the one side, it is



a rising graph. Dowry-related deaths take place in Kerala. This is a serious gap in the gender equality equation.

The SCR Bureau statistics reveal that as many as 4,810 cases of cruelty by husband or his relatives against women were registered last year. This was besides 145 and 116 cases respectively of kidnap of women and minors in 2014.

In a welcome

envisages the setting up of Complaints Committee headed by a woman and with women members in equal number to investigate complaints from women employees and suggest suitable remedial measures. But reportedly, though many organisations employing women have set up Complaints Committees these committees have not been functioning as desirable





Kerala women have broken the glass ceiling in many spheres such as the administrative service, medicine, engineering, law, journalism... The list is long. Today there are laws and platforms through which they can redress their grievances including the discrimination they suffer at the workplace and even the violence they are subjected to, in the confines of the home.

nor have they been effective grievance redressal fora.

Also, besides sexual harassment there is professional bias and discrimination that women are subjected to in subtle ways and which impede their career prospects. There is no mechanism to address such complaints of women. To make a point, India's sports icon P.T. Usha in an article recently pointed out that women athletes are subjected to discrimination in different ways, and many have had to leave the field because of the general biased attitude towards them.

As the UN notes, the gaps remain. Kerala women have made great strides. They have achieved immense heights with regard to professional excellence as bureaucrats, scientists, journalists and many other professionals. Yet, the discrimination continues in many professions. Despite accounting for half the population how many women occupy positions of decision – making? It is a dismally low number. In the field of journalism there is hardly any woman who heads a news bureau. In her recently published biography 'Breaking News', senior journalist Kamla Mankekar notes, that when a woman reporter takes a proactive stand for taking up reporting assignments, the attitude is termed as "aggressive" as it is a woman who is involved. The same strategy by a male journalist would have been thought of as being enterprising. Such an attitude would have been experienced by many women journalists including this writer in news bureaus in Kerala.

In the political arena too Kerala dismally lags behind in the number of women who are represented in the Assembly or the State Cabinet. Similar is the situation in the hierarchy of political parties in the State. Studies show that there is a fall in the work participation rate among women in Kerala.

Ineffective redressal mechanism

Some years back, on the occasion of

International Women's Day, the Kerala Women's Commission had conducted a workshop for women journalists and recorded their experiences in media organizations and to inquire into the bias if any, they suffered in the newsroom. While the Women's panel did take up the complaints of women journalists, all that could be achieved was a communication sent by the panel to respective news organizations to set up Complaints Committee to address grievances of women employees. The only satisfaction was that the male employee against whom complaint was filed was summoned to appear before an adalat convened by the Women's panel and questioned on his alleged discriminatory behaviour. To that extent, the Commission had fulfilled its effectiveness through bringing to the notice of the civil society of a complaint by a woman employee. Beyond that, there was no redress for the aggrieved woman journalist.

As the U.N declaration emphasises, this is the occasion to uphold women's achievements, recognize the challenges, and focus greater attention on women's rights and gender equality to mobilise all sections of people to do their part. The Beijing Platform for Action focuses on 12 critical areas of concern, and envisions a world where each woman and girl can exercise her choices, such as participating in politics, getting education, having an income, and living in societies free from violence and discrimination. Such should be the scenario in Kerala if gender parity is to prevail. ■

The writer is a journalist based in Kozhikode

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 was made effective on April 23, 2013. The statute has been enacted almost 16 years after landmark judgment in Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan. The Act attempts to target sexual harassment as a social menace and, therefore, has a wider remit.

On Sexual Harassment Laws

Economic disparity is a major cause of the inequality between the two sexes. Man has enjoyed a higher position in the familial and social hierarchy as money and related pleasures passed through his hands. Hence for a gender equal society, it is inevitable that women achieve economic independence. A safe and secure work environment for women is thus indispensable in achieving this goal. Sexual harassment at the workplace is not only a violation of a person's fundamental rights, but it also adversely affects the social and economic empowerment of women and the goal of inclusive growth.

One of the most comprehensive definitions for

sexual harassment was provided by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). It says: "It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person's sex. Harassment can include "sexual harassment" or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general. The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an

employee of the employer, such as a client or customer."

The landmark Indian case Vishaka & Others vs. State of Rajasthan & Others has defined sexual harassment in what is popularly known as the Vishaka Guidelines, which form the basis of the sexual harassment at the workplace laws in India. In this judgment

sexual harassment is defined as: "Sexual harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or by implication) as:

- Physical contact and advances
- A demand or request for sexual favours;
- Sexually coloured remarks;





work whether she is drawing salary, or honorarium or voluntary, whether in government, public or private enterprise such conduct can be humiliating and may constitute a health and safety problem. It is discriminatory, for instance when the woman has reasonable grounds to believe that her objection would disadvantage her in connection with her employment or work including recruiting or promotion or when it creates a hostile work environment. Adverse consequences might be visited if the victim does not consent to the conduct in question or raises any objection thereto”.

Importance of the Vishaka Case in Sexual Harassment Laws

The landmark judgement of the Supreme Court in Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan defined sexual harassment against women at the workplace. It was after the Vishaka case that sexual harassment came to be categorised as human rights violation. Before 1997, sexual harassment at the workplace was not a concept recognized by Indian courts of law. However, in some notable decisions involving sexual harassment at the workplace such as in the cases of Rupan Deol Bajaj v. Kanwar Pal Singh Gil and Shehnaz v. Saudi Arabian Airlines, it was squarely recognized as a wrong under existing law. Finally, in 1997, in response to the rising number of violent acts against women in the workplace, the Supreme Court took the long awaited step of judicial activism and created a binding and enforceable set of rules designed to protect the fundamental rights of women by eradicating sexual harassment.

The immediate cause for

the filing of the writ petition in the Vishaka case is an incident of alleged brutal gang rape of a social worker in a village of Rajasthan. The incident revealed the hazards to which a working woman may be exposed and the depravity to which sexual harassment could degenerate; and the urgency for safeguards by an alternative mechanism in the absence of legislative measures. As legislative measures were absent, the need was to find an effective alternative mechanism to fulfil this felt and urgent social need. In Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan the Court observed that: “Gender equality includes protection from sexual harassment and right to work with dignity, which is a universally recognised basic human right. The common minimum requirement of this right has received global acceptance. The international conventions and norms are, therefore, of great significance in the formulation of guidelines to achieve this purpose.” The judgement in Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan is historic as it forms the basis of the sexual harassment of women at workplaces laws in India.

The Vishaka guidelines, in addition to defining sexual harassment at the workplace, made several other provisions for the prevention and redressal of female employees. It provided that it shall be the duty of the employer or other responsible persons in work places or other institutions to prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment and to provide the procedures for the resolution, settlement or prosecution of acts of sexual harassment by taking all steps required. It also provided that all employers or persons in charge of work place

whether in the public or private sector should take appropriate steps to prevent sexual harassment. The guidelines also contained provisions for preventive steps, criminal proceedings, disciplinary action, complaint mechanism, workers’ initiative to raise issues regarding sexual harassment, awareness of the rights of female employees in this regard, third party harassment, suitable measures to be observed by the employers’ in the private sector, etc. It was also directed by the Court that the guidelines and norms would be strictly observed in all workplaces for the preservation and enforcement of the right to gender equality of the working women. These directions would be binding and enforceable in law until suitable legislation is enacted to occupy the field.

For about 15 years, the Vishaka guidelines remained the authority until the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, was passed in 2013. The Act is founded upon the constitutional rights to life, liberty, equality, and the right to practise any profession or carry out any occupation, which presupposes the availability of an enabling work environment for women that is safe and secure in every aspect.

A major advantage the Act has over the Vishaka guidelines is that in the Act, women workers in every sector of the economy is covered in its purview including even domestic workers. The Act achieves universality by including the clause “No woman shall be subjected to sexual harassment at any workplace”. However the provisions in the Act regarding

- Showing pornography;
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature

Where any of these acts is committed in circumstances where under the victim of such conduct has a reasonable apprehension that in relation to the victim’s employment or

false complaints may deter women from filing complain and thus render the purpose of the Act redundant. The Act is purported to be implemented by setting up 'Complaints Committees' at various levels, with an internal committee in every workplace and a local committee at the district level. These complaints' committees exercise powers or discharge functions under the Act. The first solution available to the aggrieved woman is conciliation, which if conducted successfully and a settlement has been reached, no further action is available.

The Supreme Court in all of sexual harassment of women at the workplace has touched a very sensitive note and admitted the fact that sexual harassment at workplace is not only humiliating but may also constitute health and safety problems. The Hon'ble Court has done its lot in cases relating to sexual harassment of women at workplace and has upheld the dignity and honour of working women. Now it is for the Parliament to enact a suitable legislation to make them more effective in implementation.

Legislative Measures

The Indian Penal Code was drafted in 1860, and during that period no one had envisaged a time when fifty percent of women joining the workplace would experience incidents of sexual harassment. The Code, therefore, did not adequately provide for specific protection of women from harassment at work places. Most working women have come to regard sexual harassment as an 'occupational hazard' and society in general thinks it is a normal behaviour for a man to harass a woman. Perhaps it is because of this dismissive attitude and trivialization of the issue that

no real effort has been made by lawmakers to understand the issue, or work out desirable amendments to cope with the situation.

It was only after the horrendous Delhi gang-rape in December 2012 that the Indian Government was besieged with protests and demands to enact far reaching legislation to protect women. It was forced to expedite the long-awaited enactment of the Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment Bill of 2010, which had taken over 13 years to be drafted and to reach Parliament, and a further three years to be enacted. India finally enacted its law on prevention of sexual



harassment against female employees at the workplace. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 was made effective on April 23, 2013. The statute has been enacted almost 16 years after landmark judgment in Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan. The Act attempts to target sexual harassment as a social menace and, therefore, has a wider remit.

The Act has been enacted with the objective of providing women protection against sexual harassment at the workplace and for the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment. Sexual ha-

arrassment is considered as a violation of the fundamental right of a woman to equality as guaranteed under Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution and her right to life and to live with dignity as per Article 21. It has also been considered as a violation of a right to practice or to carry out any occupation, trade or business under Article 19(1)(g), which includes a right to a safe environment free from harassment.

The definition of sexual harassment in the Sexual Harassment Act is in line with the Supreme Court's definition in the Vishaka Judgment and includes any unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or by

offensive or hostile work environment; or humiliating treatment likely to affect the lady employee's health or safety may amount to sexual harassment.

The ambit of the Sexual Harassment Act is very wide and is applicable to the organized sector as well as the unorganized sector. In view of the wide definition of 'workplace', the statute, inter alia, applies to government bodies, private and public sector organisations, non-governmental organisations, organisations carrying on commercial, vocational, educational, entertainment, industrial, financial activities, hospitals and nursing homes, educational institutes, sports institutions and stadiums used for training individuals. As per the Sexual Harassment Act, a workplace also covers within its scope places visited by employees during the course of employment or for reasons arising out of employment - including transportation provided by the employer for the purpose of commuting to and from the place of employment.

The definition of 'employee' under the Sexual Harassment Act is fairly wide and covers regular, temporary, ad hoc employees, individuals engaged on daily wage basis, either directly or through an agent, contract labour, co-workers, probationers, trainees, and apprentices, with or without the knowledge of the principal employer, whether for remuneration or not, working on a voluntary basis or otherwise, whether the terms of employment are express or implied.

The Act requires an employer to set up an 'Internal Complaints Committee' (ICC) at each office or branch, of an organization employing at least 10 employees. The government



The Sexual Harassment Act is a much awaited development and a significant step towards ensuring women a safe and healthy work environment.

is in turn required to set up a 'Local Complaints Committees' (LCC) at the district level to investigate complaints regarding sexual harassment from establishments where the ICC has not been constituted on account of the establishment having less than 10 employees or if the complaint is against the employer. The Sexual Harassment Act also sets out the constitution of the committees, process to be followed for making a complaint and inquiring into the complaint in a time bound manner.

The Act provides interim measures such as transfer of the aggrieved woman or the respondent or granting leave to the aggrieved. The law allows female employees to request for conciliation in order to settle the matter. To ensure that the protections contemplated under the Sexual Harassment Act do not get misused, provisions for action against "false or malicious" complainants have also been made.

Employer's Obligations

In addition to ensuring compliance with the other provisions stipulated, the Sexual Harassment Act casts certain obligations upon the employer to, inter alia, provide a safe working environment display conspicuously at the workplace, the penal consequences of indulging in acts that may constitute sexual harassment and the composition of the Internal Complaints Committee organise workshops and awareness programmes at regular intervals for sensitizing employees on the issues and implications of workplace sexual harassment and organizing orientation programmes for members of the Internal Complaints Committee treat sexual harassment as a misconduct under the service rules and initiate action for misconduct.

The employer is also required to monitor the timely submission of reports by the ICC. As a result of the growing importance of the issues relating to sexual harassment

and protection of female employees in India, a new section was added to the Indian Penal Code, 1860 through the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013, which enlists the acts which constitute the offence of sexual harassment and further envisages penalty / punishment for such acts. A man committing an offence under this section is punishable with imprisonment, the term of which may range between 1 - 3 years or with fine or both. Since the amendment criminalizes all acts of sexual harassment, employers shall be required to report any offences of sexual harassment to the appropriate authorities.

The Sexual Harassment Act is a much awaited development and a significant step towards ensuring women a safe and healthy work environment. However there are some issues and problems related to it. A major drawback of the Act is that it is not gender neutral; i.e., it brings only female employees under its purview. Also, an important

recommendation of the Standing Committee, i.e., the definition of 'aggrieved woman' does not make a reference to victimization of the employee.

The definition of the term 'sexual harassment' contain the words 'verbal, textual, physical, graphic or electronic actions' and this may lead to misinterpretation. The constitution of ICCs at "all administrative units or offices" may pose a challenge; the training of members of ICC will be time consuming. The question of practicality arises regarding the obligation of the employer to address the grievances in respect of sexual harassment at workplace in a time bound manner. The law allows the employer to initiate action against the complainant in case of a false or malicious complaint. This provision, although meant to protect the employer's interests, is likely to deter victims from reporting such incidents and filing complaints, which may in turn defeat the purpose for which the law was enacted.

Although there is a provision for the deduction of salary of the respondent in case the allegation has been proved, no corresponding changes has been made to the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 of India, which restricts the nature of deductions that may be made from an employee's salary. The Sexual Harassment Act does not stipulate any monetary liability on the employer in case of harassment on the part of an employee against another female employee. We can hope that unlike some of the other laws, the Sexual Harassment Act is implemented well, which in itself would go a long way in protecting the employees' interests and well-being in India. ■

The writer is Member, Kerala State Women's Commission

Sylvia Plath

Poetess of Feminine Grace

*Dying is an art
And, I do it exceptionally well*

On the morning of 11th February, 1963 Sylvia left out bread and milk for her children, Frieda and Nicholas. Completely sealing off the kitchen, she turned on the gas and thrust her head deep into the stove. It is believed that she intended for someone to save her.....

One of the most admired and influencing poetic genius of the 20th century, Sylvia Plath always carried a passion for the eternity as she had for the Muse. When she was successful to hug her eternal longing, she was at the peak of her beauty and career as poetess, ie. only 30.



Many of her best-known poems are written during the final, turbulent weeks of her life, read as if they have been chiseled, with a fine surgical instrument, out of arctic ice.

Intensely autobiographical, Plath's poems explore her own mental anguish, her troubled marriage to fellow poet Ted Hughes, her unresolved conflicts with her parents, and her own vision of herself. Whether Plath wrote about nature or about the social restrictions on individuals, she stripped away the polite veneer. She let her writing express elemental forces and primeval fears. In doing so, she laid bare the contradictions that tore apart appearance and hinted at some of the tensions hovering just beneath the surface of the American way of life in the post war period.

Born in 1932 in Boston, Plath was the daughter of a German immigrant college professor, Otto Plath, and one of his students, Aurelia Schober. She was a gifted child and published her first poem in the famous Boston at the age of 8. The first shock in her life came when her father Otto Plath passed away at the same year. Otto had great influence over Sylvia's poems and her well known poem "Daddy" is addressed to him although she uses harsh words at him which stem from the insatiable thirst to rejoin him in the other world.

Sylvia Plath was a gifted student who had won numerous awards and had published stories and poetry in national magazines while still in her teens. She attended Smith College on



Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath

scholarship and continued to excel, winning a Mademoiselle Fiction contest one year and garnering a prestigious guest editorship of the magazine the following summer. It was during her undergraduate years that Plath began to suffer the symptoms of severe depression that would ultimately lead to her death. Having made a recovery, Plath returned to Smith for her degree. She earned a Fulbright grant to study at Cambridge University in England, and it was there that she met poet Ted Hughes. The two were married in 1956. Plath published two major works during her lifetime, *The Bell Jar* and a poetry volume titled *The Colossus*. Both received warm reviews. However, the end of her marriage in 1962 left Plath with two young children to care for and, after an intense burst of creativity that produced the poems in *Ariel*, she committed suicide by inhaling gas from a kitchen oven.

Revenge against male dominance

Sylvia's poems are sharp attacks against male dominance though the suicidal notes make the background score. Male dominance is one of the

psychological problems that stems from his innate urge towards aggression. Men have been taught to relate to the world in terms of dominance and control, and they have been taught to relate to the world in terms of violence and control and they have been taught violence is an acceptable method of maintaining control, resolving conflicts and expressing anger. Men hide their inferiority complex by pretending to be superior through aggression.

Women's talents, genius, capacities have been destroyed so that men can claim that they themselves are superior to themselves and to the world.

Sylvia Plath's *Daddy* is a paragon to prove how poetry can effectively be used against oppression. *Daddy* shows the polar dualities in Sylvia's innate nature or rather her problematic issue which lasted till her last breath. Her father fixation and her subconscious urge to free from that magnificent obsession.

Every woman adores a fascist
The boot in the face, the brute
Brute heart of a brute like you

This is the most controversial lines in the poem. Debates have been going on the depth of these lines and outcomes are as different as the debates are. Throughout the poem, the speaker and "daddy," masochistic and sadistic figures respectively, appear dependent upon each other, and both figures' connections to Nazism (as Jew and Fascist) link their dependence on each other. In the speaker's consciously disturbing over-statement that "Every

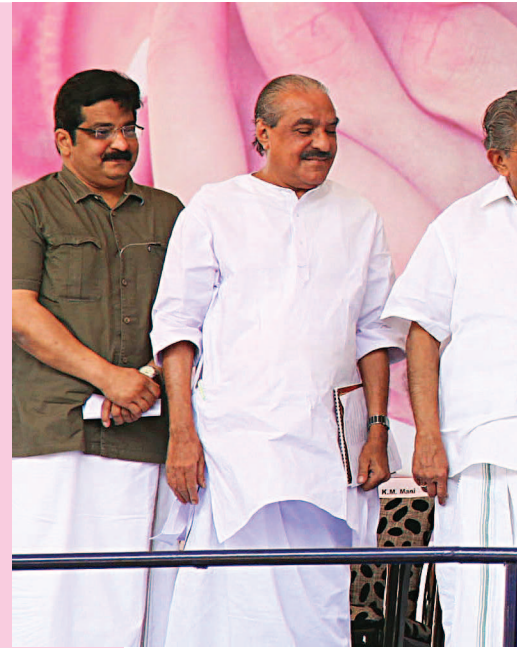
Contd. on Page 50

Every woman adores a fascist
The boot in the face, the brute
Brute heart of a brute like you

The silence depressed me
It wasn't the silence of silence
It was my own silence

Nirbhaya

Converging Minds and Mentality



Whether Nirbhaya incident could make any behaviour change in Kerala is a question with less positive answer. But it created a social awakening among the civil society. Unless the state has an effective policy to support women and to change the attitude of citizens we cannot achieve the status of a modern state in the international level. The Nirbhaya project in Kerala meant for it.

Once again the name Nirbhaya has heated a debate all over the world, coinciding with the international women's day. Whatever debate the documentary titled India's Daughter by British filmmaker Leslee Udwin on Nirbhaya can heap up in India and abroad, the stain of 2012 December-Delhi-gang-rape on our nation's pride is not an easy wash. Implementing policies and creating infrastructure to ensure safety and security to women are water marks of modernity. Converging the term Nirbhaya- denoting a brave girl who fought a crime alone until death- to a policy and vision to enhance safety and security to women is doing justice to the

girl and her sacrifice. A 1000 crore-budget allocation for Nirbhaya project by the central government is thus better understood as washing away the blood stain of Nirbhaya by implementing policy measures to demolish entrenched patriarchal mind set.

A national shame as former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh rightly called; the Nirbhaya incident forcefully opened many eyes to the real issue of positioning Indian woman in the society. Without waiting to see how it struck other states and what it brought forth, the government of Kerala set up a model project to ensure security to





women and empower them to create their own space in the society. The vision behind the project is not only to strengthen law and order; it envisions building up infrastructure for free movement of women.

District Collector of Calicut and former private secretary to the Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala, N. Prasanth says, "the project Nirbhaya is a decision of the government to go beyond the Delhi gang rape and create Nirbhaya zones in the society in the initial stage to ensure women a descent public life. The role of Nirbhaya project is to create a safe and danger free Kerala

for women even at night".

The time has come to change the notion of feminine in Kerala; the proposed report on Nirbhaya Keralam, Surakshitha Keralam reads so. The report rightly observes that the society normally consider physically active women as 'unfeminine' which further enhances the inhibition and helplessness of women victims. This understanding about the social position of women in Kerala as the proposal reads is the crux of it that justifies the need of a grass root level training for girls, women and men.

N. Prasanth's conceptualisation of

what a woman need to be in Kerala is a good connect to this. He says: "women should have a public life and could move freely and fearlessly without keeping a timeframe like before 6pm or 7pm. They should be able to move around the way I do. Nirbhaya meant to create an infrastructure for that."

On the other side, comments of Delhi rape convict Mukesh that a woman is responsible for rape than men triggered the controversy all over India. Also the comments by the defence lawyer M.L. Sharma to the director of the documentary that a woman should not go alone at night and a girl should



A women's day message by famous social activist and academician Mary Roy to one of the journals published by Information and Public Relations Department that a woman should not marry unless she achieved financial independence is worth enough to think.



be treated as a flower which is dirty in gutter and to be worshipped in temple demand a serious intervention. Such comments show an average Indian mind set on Indian women even in the 21st century tarnishing the image of Indian modernity. Such shameless comments before an international camera show the need of the state intervention in the society to change the psyche of people.

Where does a better Indian state Kerala position her women? Are Kerala women not empowered despite her high literacy rate and educational status? A collective empowerment of women is yet to achieve in Kerala as most of them have a burnt child dreads fire fear psychosis. Genesis of self emphatic Noras to establish their social identity and public life may not occur unless there is a state mechanism to check social evil. Hence cities and districts that reported maximum crime against women and children will be covered initially by Nirbhaya project in Kerala. It includes the cities of Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode and districts of Alappuzha, Kottayam and Kasargode.

The idea is that the formation of trained Nirbhaya volunteers to scrutinise the society while establishing friendly ties with surroundings to help women and to assist police. They educate the society about the legal provisions regarding the safety and protection of women and children. The volunteers will be given training on the

The first Nirbhaya volunteer team was formed in Kochi. Women in all walks of society including actress Renjini joined the training session led by ADGP R. Sreelekha, the then nirbhaya state coordinator.



basic structure of the Police Department and what is to be done during emergencies, self defence techniques, basic first aid, counselling Techniques etc.

The first Nirbhaya volunteer team was formed in Kochi. Women in all walks of society including actress Renjini joined the training session led by ADGP R. Sreelekha, the then nirbhaya state coordinator. The self help groups like Kudumbasree, Janashree Mission, NGOs and Vanitha Jagrata Samitis attended the session.

The master brain behind shaping up the project R. Sreelekha is of the opinion that without changing the mindset of the society the status of women in Kerala will not change. "The stigma of the society that an assault on women is a disgrace to the family that tarnishes its social status compels women to suffer the disgrace even in rape," she said on the occasion of training of Nirbhaya volunteers at Town Hall, Kochi.

Nirbhaya guideline as a policy and project states: "...it is a mental attitude and culture. To set a mental attitude

among women to come out without fear, it is proposed to declare certain areas as Nirbhaya Zones... strict security measures will be taken to prevent incidence of crime. Women will be encouraged to come out to the Nirbhaya Zone at any time they want. Street plays, carnivals, 24-hour recreation shops, coffee shops, etc. will be made available there to encourage participation of women."

Students are given chance for internship at police stations. The project guideline also proposes Nirbhaya club and gentleman's club for school girls and boys. It aims for a change in the thought pattern and behaviour towards the opposite sex that may not be acquired from the family and neighbourhood which are not free from gender inequality. As the project guideline states a woman's boldness is often misunderstood as manliness. Many girls comment that their liberal outlook is often misinterpreted as liberty to sex in Kerala.

Some positive aspect is that an attitude change has started happening among women in the grass root level, thanks to the kudumbasree. A state directed Kudubasree in Kerala has positioned certain strata of unemployed ordinary women in the society by dragging them out of the kitchens. This successful move of women's financial and social independence has created an identity consciousness and collective consciousness among women at the grass root level. A women's day message by famous social activist and academician Mary Roy to one of the journals published by Information and Public Relations Department that a woman should not marry unless she achieved financial independence is worth enough to think.

The preference given to kudumbashree while selecting Nirbhaya volunteers can mark a second stage of empowerment from financial to social. Effort of some panchayats like Mutholi in Kottayam to train school girls in martial arts for self defence is yet another step to make a section of women confident. A slow intervention that happens in the society through Nirbhaya project could be speed up if the state can tap a decent portion of central

budget for it.

Nirbhaya, a symbolic name that was popularised during the struggle for justice to the girl who suffered all atrocities in Delhi has transformed to a central and state policy now. Deep was the physical injuries she suffered; severe was the atrocities, but the impact she created to fight violence against women has no match. Whether Nirbhaya incident could make any behaviour change in Kerala is a question with less positive answer. But it created a social awakening among the civil society. Unless the state has an effective policy to support women and to change the attitude of citizens we cannot achieve the status of a modern state in the international level. The Nirbhaya project in Kerala meant for it.

Why sexual atrocities against women are increasing in Kerala! This could be answered in connection with its speedy transformation to a service class society from an agrarian one without touching the industrial sector in the economic growth ladder. This quantum leap to the service sector where women have a dominant role to play from the front office to decision

making has opened up the gate way to them from the status of a domestic being to a social being. In this makeover her role has changed from a bread maker to a bread winner. The social and state system and infrastructure need to change to accommodate this social change that positioned women as social beings.

This may sound strange in the present social circumstances that face odd situation where a brother cannot accompany his sister fearing moral policing. Undoubtedly, such an odd situation never had a lineage in Kerala that was once known as 'penmalayanma'. Nirbhaya stands for a cultural change to place women better if it implements systematically. A government initiated place for women to sit and discuss; to eat out and roam fearlessly is a better vision to position Kerala women to a better status she deserves. This could awaken social consciousness that creates a badal (alternative) to grin against moral police and to create a women friendly culture that sounds of an educated society. ■

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Statement about ownership and other particulars of Kerala Calling Monthly

(Form IV – See rule 8)

1. Place of Publication : Thiruvananthapuram
2. Periodicity of Publication : Monthly
3. Printer's Name : Mini Antony IAS
Whether citizen of India : Yes
Address : Director, Information and Public Relations Department, Govt. Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram
4. Publisher's Name : Mini Antony IAS
Whether citizen of India : Yes
Address : Director, Information and Public Relations Department, Govt. Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram
5. Editor's Name : Mini Antony IAS
Whether citizen of India : Yes
Address : Director, Information and Public Relations Department, Govt. Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram

6. Name and Address of individual who own the newspaper Government of Kerala
I, Mini Antony, declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/-
Thiruvananthapuram
01.03.2015

Mini Antony IAS
Publisher

Contd. from Page 21

the Shendurney Eco Tourism project has been completed during the year 2013-14 and action is underway to complete the second phase of the project. Action is also underway to train youths from scheduled Tribe communities living in the forests for equipping them to be engaged as tourism guides in eco-tourism centres.

My Government had accorded sanction for a scheme entitled 'Krishi Raksha padhathi, under Mission 676. My Government accords high priority to the ecosystem services rendered by the biodiversity rich forests of the state. 10 new ecotourism locations will be opened during this financial year.

Kerala has been adjudged the best governed state on the basis of excellent law and order situation. The Kerala police has launched various innovative schemes like student police Cadet, Kadalora Jagrata Samithi, Safe Campus Clean Campus, Janamaithri Scheme, Schemes for Senior Citizens, Children and Women. My Government desires to energise the Police force through annual recruitment.

Prevention of crimes against women is one of the priority areas of Kerala Police. "Nirbhaya Keralam Surakshitha Keralam" is a comprehensive scheme launched on 15-2-2014 to ensure safety and protection of women. This project will be implemented in two phases. The first phase will cover 6 districts and the second will cover the remaining 8 districts. At present this project is launched in Corporation of Kochi.

In Kerala more than 4000 people die every year in road accidents. Almost 40,000 people are seriously injured in road accidents every year. My Government has planned a comprehensive project named "Subhayathra 2015" to implement Road Safety measures strictly and reduce

road accidents. My Government plans to provide speed detection cameras in all important roads. Speed radar and Alchometer will be provided to all Police Stations. My Government also plans to collect fines imposed for traffic violation through Banks and through Credit Cards/Debit Cards. Traffic Training Institute will be established in Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi. In co-operation with Bharat petroleum Corporation Limited, Highway Ambulance services will be introduced in Highways to handle accident cases. Traffic clubs will be formed in all schools for inculcating traffic awareness. Similarly, my Government is planning to form a Special Traffic Law Enforcement wing to deal with scientific traffic enforcement to reduce the number of accidents in the State.

The well planned and well co-ordinated action by my Government known as 'Operation Kubera' against the loan sharks who exploit poor people by charging exorbitant interest on loans, produced desirable results.

Another prestigious programme initiated by my Government in 2014 is "Safe Campus Clean Campus", aiming to root out liquor, tobacco products etc. from the premises of schools and Colleges. By 2016 all School/College campuses and premises will be made drug-tobacco-liquor free zones.

My Government plans to establish the National University for police Science and Internal Security this year. My Government proposes to have an all women India Reserve Battalion and one India Reserve Battalion for Coastal Security. During the last year, Kerala Fire & Rescue Services Department rescued 8477 human lives and 5347 animal lives in various Fire & Rescue operations. Properties worth around Rs.8508.67 crore were saved in the operations.

Speedy, Modern, Assured, Responsible and Transparent

(SMART) Revenue Office is being implemented aiming at providing "any time anywhere service" to the citizens' Nearly one crore digitally signed online certificates have been issued by the Revenue Officers in the State. In the Pilot Villages where the RELIS (Revenue Land Information System) Project is running, nearly 17,000 online/ Transfer of Registry/Mutation have been carried out in fully automated web enabled manner.

"Zero Landless Project - 2015" a unique project of my Government is being implemented with the aim of achieving the target of 100% zero landless families in the State by the end of 2015. Under this project every landless family is assigned 3 cents of land. The 1st phase of distribution of land has already been completed. The second phase is being undertaken with full vigour aiming at the fulfillment of the project. Institute of Land and Disaster Management be developed into a will National Level Centre of Excellence in Land and Disaster Management.

The Department of Legal Metrology, Kerala, started the verification and stamping of BP Apparatus for the 1st time in India. The verification and stamping of Electronic Balance used in jewellery and other firms has been started.

Being a consumer oriented State, controlling the price rise is not at all possible without an effective public distribution system. 13 essential items like pulses, spices, rice, sugar and coconut oil are being sold by my Government at 20-35% lower than the open market prices. Hypermarkets at Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam and Thalassery were inaugurated. Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation has procured around 15 lakh MT paddy from about 4 lakh farmers and made payment of Rs.2500 crore which is a rare achievement of my Government.

Rice is issued at the rate of

Rs.1/ per kilogram to 20 lakh of Antyodaya Anna Yojana [AAY] and BPL households and wheat is issued at a rate of Rs.2/-per kilogram to BPL families. Civil Supplies Department has started the initial stages of End-to-End computerization in public distribution system. Initial steps are taken to implement the National Food Security Act, 2013 and my Government has started the Ration Card renewal process along with it.

The Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation outlets



will be opened in all Grama Panchayaths by 2015-16. For extending more benefits to the public, more Maveli Stores will be converted to Super Markets with modern facilities based on the sales Potential.

The State of Kerala is very much indebted to the Non-Resident Keralites for their contribution in the development of Kerala. The total remittance of NRK's to Kerala is more than Rs.90,000 crore over and above the NRK deposits of about Rs.97,400 crore in various financial institutions as on 30-9-2014. Today we are facing very serious problems due to the internal developments in various countries. My

Government has taken very effective steps to bring back persons from Libya and Iraq with the help of the Government of India. The rehabilitation of NRK's returning from various countries has to be taken up very seriously and we have taken effective initiative in this field.

Visa cheating and criminal offences against the life and property of NRKs has become a very serious problem today. My Government has decided to establish an NRI commission to deal with such cases exclusively and effectively. My Government

strengthen the activities of Kerala state cashew Workers Apex Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd (CAPEX) and Kerala State Cashew Development Corporation through infusion of adequate funds and supply of raw material in time, which will ensure more working days. The major campaign like Emerging Kerala 2012 and Young Entrepreneurs Summit (YES) 2014 have resulted in a huge surge of technology based enterprises across the State and the movement is ongoing.

The availability of the

for other Public Sector Undertakings as well.

The expansion of the refining capacity of the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) Kochi Refinery from 9.5 Million Metric Ton Per Annum [MMTPA] to 15.5 MMTPA will be completed during 2016 which will result in production of 5,00,000 TPA propylene. Considering the scope of new downstream petrochemical industries with feed stock from BPCL, Kerala state Industrial Development Corporation will set up a

programme. I am very happy to inform that for the first time, the remote Edamalakkudy Grama panchayath which is the only scheduled tribe panchayath in the State has got mobile and internet connectivity through this project. My Government will complete the process of providing high speed broadband connectivity to all Grama panchayaths in the State through National optical Fibre Network (NOFN) during this month.

Kerala State has become a premium IT investment



has initiated steps to start the recruitment of persons to various Gulf Countries by Government agencies.

The Medium, Small, Micro Enterprises (MSME) sector in the State has consistently registered higher growth rate in respect of enterprises. My Government proposes to conduct District Level Adalats in association of various Industries Associations to sort out issues of the MSME sector. Branding of handloom products under the name and style "Kerala Handloom" will be promoted to project our products and to enhance its national and global demands. In the cashew sector, my Government intends to

unique mix of tropical fruits, vegetables, meat, milk, poultry and marine products offers immense scope for food processing industries in Kerala. Factoring into this advantage, Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation [KSIDC] and Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation [KINFRA] will establish a Mega Food Park with thrust to processing and export of marine products with central assistance. The Malabar Cements has established a cement bulk handling terminal at Kochi for importing coal, limestone' sand and cement. This hub could be utilized for importing raw materials in bulk

petrochemical park adjoining the BPCL Refinery. LNG pipeline project is critical to the development of the State and my Government will provide all assistance to Gas Authority of India Limited for the completion of laying the LNG pipelines. Government will also expedite the Kochi city Gas scheme under which piped LNG can be provided to the domestic cooking gas consumers.

My Government has rolled out e-district project in all the fourteen districts. Idukki has become the first District in the country to have 100 mega bytes per second broadband internet connectivity through National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)

destination in India with its state-of-the-art infrastructure and highly skilled human resources. Smart City Project in Kochi has achieved substantial progress in all spheres of activities during this year. Technopark, Thiruvananthapuram is one of the largest IT Parks in India with 7.2 million sq.ft. built-up area and 333 companies employing almost 50,000 professionals at present. At Infopark, Kochi, 25000 Professionals are working in 200 companies. Another 50000 employment opportunities will be created in the Technopark and Technocity and 30000 in Infopark, Kochi on completion of the ongoing



development projects within two years. Kozhikode is being promoted as the third IT destination in the State. The first IT building of 2.88 lakh sq.ft. built up area at Cyberpark, Kozhikode is expected to be completed by December 2015 which will provide direct employment to 3000 professionals. My Government has brought out Kerala Technology Start-up Policy 2015 which will foster the development of Start-up ecosystem.

My Government is in the process of creating a Technology Innovation Zone at Kalamasserry, which will be hosting incubators in multiple domains and providing all the other support facilities. This zone will include the established Startup village. My Government will facilitate the creation of Anger and venture funds to support these Start-up companies.

My Government has given utmost importance for the development of core road networks in the State. My Government has already initiated the project "Sustainable and Planned Effort to Ensure Infrastructure Development of Kerala, (SPEID Kerala) for

constructing flyovers, bridges and roads in selected areas in the State costing nearly Rs.10,000 crore. Necessary action will be initiated this year for starting the construction of all works under SPEID Kerala. The construction of the Kollam and Alappuzha Bypasses will be commenced in March 2015. The construction of Thalassery - Mahe Bypass will be started this year.

National Highways carry 40% of the total vehicular traffic and hence the development of national highways is very critical and my Government gives top priority to it. My Government has decided to go ahead with the four laning of NH 47 and 17 with Right Of Way (ROW) of 45 metre width and decided to acquire and transfer the land required for the purpose to the National Highway Authority. The Thiruvananthapuram City Road Improvement Project will be completed during this year. The works of Kozhikode City Road Improvement Project will be commenced this year. The 2nd phase of the Kerala State Transport Project (KSTP) approved by the World Bank has already commenced and the construction of 7 packages is in progress. The Model Safety

Corridor Project from Kazhakuttom to Adoor under KSTP will be implemented this year. My Government has decided to implement the Light Metro Project at Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode in place of Monorail Project. The Light Metro Projects will be implemented by the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), Kerala Rapid Transit Corporation Limited (KRTL).

At present 182 bridges, flyovers and ROBs are being constructed by PWD and other agencies under it. Out of this, 100 bridges will be commissioned in the State in the coming 400 days. This year my Government proposes to undertake implementation of 14 new mega projects in the State under Annuity Scheme.

The cashew container transportation between Thoothukudi and Kollam will be diverted through coastal shipping. Development of Kodungallur port with construction of wharf and yard will begin at Kodungallur. Construction of godowns with NABARD assistance will begin at Kodungallur and Azheekal port. Construction of wharf for exclusive use of Union Territory of Lakshadweep will begin at

Beyppore port for which Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) study is progressing. My Government could secure Viability Gap Funding to the tune of about Rs. 800 crore for the construction work of Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport and the project will be implemented on a Design Build Finance Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) mode.

Seventeen new Government colleges and one Aided Arts and Science College were sanctioned in 18 Assembly Constituencies, which are not having Government/Aided Colleges. Sanction was given to start more than 200 Self-financing Arts and Science Colleges under Kannur, Calicut, M.G. and Kerala Universities in order to have better access of higher education to eligible students. Steps have been initiated to upgrade the Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) into an Indian Institute of Engineering, Science and Technology with more research facilities.

Students' Entrepreneurship Scheme has been implemented to promote Entrepreneurship among students. Grace marks will be given to those students and attendance is being granted

to selected students. As part of the Emerging Kerala Project, linkages have been established with Multi National Companies like Bosch and Mercedes Benz to improve the skill levels of the students.

Scholar Support Programme (SSP) is a new initiative of my Government to provide additional support to weak students in curricular areas with timely assistance in the form of tutorials, additional lectures, interactive sessions, question banks and study material. Classes will be conducted through personal and web based modes. My Government has decided to establish Kerala State

Education Meet being planned during this year. My Government has decided to start IIT at Palakkad District. In the general education sector, student-centric programs (viz.) career fest, career guidance and counselling, women empowerment programs etc. are proposed to be implemented during the year 2015-2016. It is also proposed to modernize vocational labs and e-office will be introduced. The State Council of Educational Research and Training has planned to prepare a comprehensive school development guidelines and plan of action in order to ensure quality of education. The learner

and Parcel services. In order to improve better transport facilities in major cities, KSRTC has already started a Subsidiary Corporation by name Kerala Urban Road Transport Corporation (KURTC) for operating JnNRUM buses. The same will start full operation during the financial year 2015-16.

The Kochi Metro Rail Project (KMRP) is progressing with the objective of completing civil works within one year. The Project has reached financial closure and considerable savings have been attained vis-a-vis the anticipated project costs. The KMRP has the best in class Rehabilitation & Resettlement Policy for minimizing possible adverse impact on project affected Persons.

As required in the sanction condition for the Kochi Metro Rail Project, action is underway to introduce a legislation for the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA) for integrating all urban transport systems under a single network and a single command and control for greater convenience of the travelling public in Kochi. My Government has prepared the Detailed Project Report for the suburban Rail Project between Thiruvananthapuram and Chengannur.

The Co-operative banking sector will be strengthened by introducing new technological measures such as installation of ATMs, introduction of Ru pay cards, DBT system etc. for rendering better services to the public.

Kerala state Electricity Board Limited (KSEBL) is presently implementing 13 projects in Small Hydro Sector totaling to a capacity of 195.1MW. My Government had already entered into a MoU with National Hydroelectric Power Corporation aiming at developing a total capacity of 82 MW in wind energy at Agali, Attappadi regions in Palakkad District. It is proposed to

construct seven 110kV sub stations, two 66kv sub-stations and six 33kv sub stations and the connected lines during 2015-16.

Kerala State Electricity Board's focus in the distribution side continues to be on service quality and in maintaining standards of supply. The National Energy conservation Award 2014 conferred on KSEBL by the Ministry of Power for being the best performer among the DISCOMS in India, is just a matter of right recognition.

Energy Management Centre proposes to develop a fresh model to establish Small Hydro Projects at Panchayath level with the participation of EMC, Local Self Government Institutions and people in the area. This Public Private Panchayath Partnership (PPPP) model will be the first of its kind in India.

My Government has approved the Kerala Solar Policy 2013 with a mission to mainstream the use of solar energy in the energy mix of Kerala and increase the installed capacity of solar sector in the State.

Kerala Tourism propose to start an innovative Tourism Project viz "God's own country - peoples own tourism" during 2015-16. Active participation of the public is the highlight of the project. Initially, it will be introduced in 144 selected Local Self Government Institutions spread all over the State. It envisages to extend the benefits of the Tourism development to the people of the locality through enhancing employment opportunities and thereby achieving economic upliftment. During the current year Tourism Department will start a distinct tourism project viz "Multi Faith Tourism Circuit."

Kerala has the distinction of being the only state in India, which constituted Biodiversity Management Committees in all the Local Self Government Institutions. The Kerala State Biodiversity Board has successfully completed the

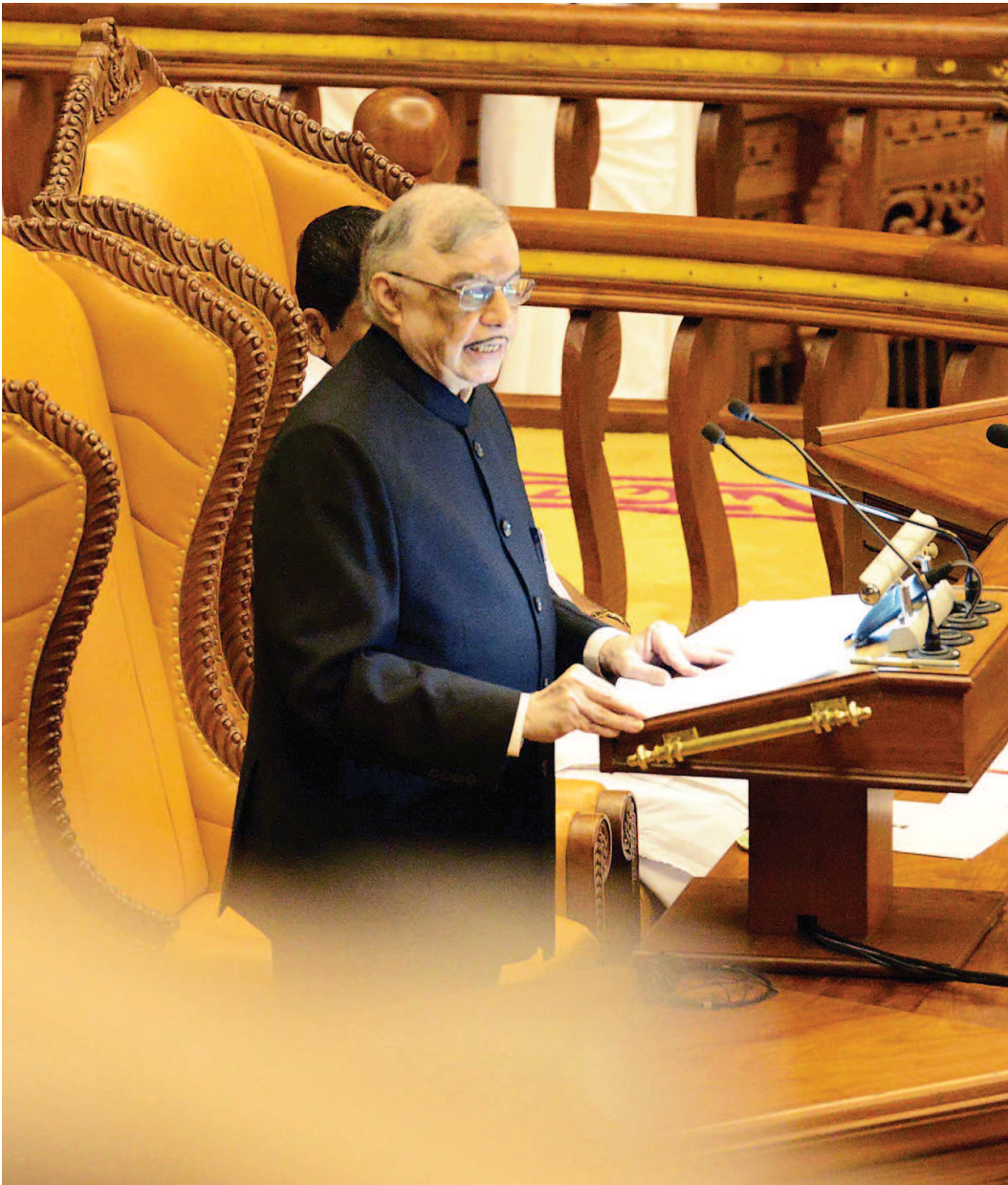


Accreditation and Assessment Council (KSAAC) in line with the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) for accrediting the Colleges in the State and neighbouring States.

My Government has decided to establish an Academic City in Kerala on the lines of the Dubai Academic City to make Kerala an International Education Hub. This idea will be taken forward in the Global

evaluation process from primary to higher secondary will be restructured scientifically. Anti-drug campaign, guidance and counselling programs will also be launched during the year 2015-2016.

Kerala State Road Transport Corporation proposes to introduce more new buses this year. As a measure to augment the non-operating income, KSRTC proposes to start Courier



utility payment such as electricity bill, water bill, payment of KSFE chitty etc. can be collected through treasuries. The salary bill of all employees are honoured only through online submission mode from April 2014.

Excise Department conducted a detailed campaign against alcoholism throughout Kerala. The campaign against alcoholism and narcotic drugs will be strengthened by implementing the programme "Liquor Free Kerala" with the assistance of Anti Liquor clubs in all Educational Institutions, Kudumbasree, Student police Cadet, National service scheme volunteers and Medias.

The State Housing policy envisages a housing shortage of 12 lakh houses in the State, which is proposed to be addressed through projects in the 12th Five year plan period.

The Union Government is moving forward for implementation of new tax regime, through introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST). My Government is wholeheartedly welcoming the GST regime with optimism that there will not be any loss of revenue. It is also expected that Government of India will compensate any loss of revenue with the introduction of GST. My Government will take all measures to get ready for the implementation of GST.

My Government has increased the wages of coir workers from Rs. 260/- to Rs. 300/- and conducted Coir Kerala-2014 and 2015, an international event on natural fibre and allied products and national level exhibitions to increase the market of coir products. The export during 2011-12 was for Rs 1052.62 crore and it has gone up to Rs 1476.03 crore in 2013-14.

During 2015-2016 Kerala Water Authority expects to complete all the ongoing schemes under "Mission 676" taken under National Bank for Agricul-

mandatory work of preparation of people's Biodiversity Register in 737 Grama panchayats. Project for the establishment of a National Biodiversity Garden and Traditional Knowledge Centre in Kerala is proposed to be established at Munnar. This will be the first state-of-the art Biodiversity garden showcasing the Biodiversity of Kerala and Western Ghats, strategically located in Munnar, a place with great tourism potential.

Kerala Official Language (Legislative) Commission is taking maximum endeavour to publish all the central Acts applicable to the State of Kerala in Malayalam. As per the policy of my Government for making Malayalam as official Language

in all aspects of administration an Official Language publication Cell was constituted for translating important judgments of the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala and short notes on the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court into Malayalam.

Kerala celebrates its 60th Birthday on 1st November 2015. An year long diamond jubilee programmes will be organized from November 2015 to November 2016 to herald the achievements and development of the State during the last 60 years. e-sutharyakeralam will be launched to bring together all petitions submitted to the Chief Minister's Public Grievance Redressal Cell [CMPGRC] to a single platform. It will be made

operational within three months.

My Government has launched 'WAMS' (Ways and Means System), a new software for the submission of ways and means clearance proposals and receiving clearance orders online to the beneficiary. My Government have constituted 10th Pay Revision Commission consisting of Justice C. N. Ramachandran Nair (Rtd.) as Chairman to study and make recommendations on revising the pay and allowances of all employees.

The core banking software for the Treasury Savings Bank will be completed by March 2015. After the implementation of core banking system many

ture and Rural Development (NABARD)/National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP)/ Technology Mission and State Plan. On completion, it will provide safe drinking water to about 60% of the population. The implementation of Jananidhi Projects will be continued and it is proposed to take up 23 Grama Panchayaths for implementation during the next year. It is proposed to construct 1000 numbers of household Rain Water Harvesting (RWH) units under the Rain Water Harvesting programmes of the Agency in the rural areas where acute drinking water scarcity is experienced.

During 2015-16 the Irrigation Department proposes to take up a new scheme of construction of "Flood Embankments" for controlling flooding and saltwater intrusion in major rivers aimed at preserving the purity of water for drinking and irrigation purposes.

In order to mitigate water shortage during summer season and for initiating advance steps for water conservation my Government proposes to take up construction of Runoff River Mini Reservoirs in 4 rivers viz. Meenachil, Vamanapuram, Achencoil and Chaliyar. My Government also proposes to start an Irrigation Museum at Thodupuzha. My Government proposes to construct a series of Regulators in Kabani basin for utilizing the water awarded by the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal.

My Government has taken very effective steps to preserve and promote the rich cultural tradition of our State and our language, Malayalam, which is now declared as a classical language by Government of India. The renovation work of Thrippunithura Hill Palace Museum, the Pazhassi Museum and the Koyikkal Palace at Nedumangad will be completed during the year 2015-16.

Mahakavi Moyinkutty Vaidyar Mappila Kala Academy and the Konkani Sahitya Academy are actively introducing various schemes in their respective fields. First phase of Raja Ravi Varma Smarakom, Kilimanoor is completed and now open to the public.

As part of establishing Heritage museums in all 14 districts, my Government has started works of Bastian Bungalow, Kochi, Kollengode Palace, Thrissur, Sreepadam Palace, Thiruvananthapuram and Pazhassi Raja Museum, Wayanad. The construction of Freedom Fighters monument at Vattiyoorkavu, where the historic meeting of State Congress was held in, is almost nearing completion. The Tagore Centenary Hall was renovated with most modern facilities and accessories at the cost of about Rs. 23.04 crores. Action is also taken up to declare Kozhikode as City of Sculpture and Kottayam as City of Murals.

It gives me immense pleasure to mention the achievements made by the Social Justice Department. I understand that proper teamwork and co-ordination of the Department catalyzed its performance. Projects like She taxi, She toilet, Food on Wheels, Gender park, Aswasakiranam, Vayomithram, Cochlear Implantation, Snehapoorvam, appointment of differently abled, Hunger free city, Prathyasa, Nirbhaya, and so many in the row including vanitharathnam puraskaram have drawn national attention.

A Comprehensive policy for the disabled will be formulated and implemented. A Comprehensive programme for Autism Spectrum Disorder will be implemented. State Initiative on Dementia, with Day Care Centres and trained caregivers will be started. One panchayath in each District will be made aged friendly with comprehensive care giving facility for the aged. Psycho-

social rehabilitation centres for mentally ill will be established in all Districts.

An International Women's Trade Centre will be established at Ernakulam by the Kerala State Women's Development Corporation. Agricultural produce marketing centres will be started by Kudumbashree at Block level of which 20% shall be earmarked for differently abled. One Panchayath in each District will be made elderly friendly with multilevel approach for tackling age related Problems.

My Government will distribute free text books to all girl students of plus one and plus two classes in the State under the aegis of the 'Her Education is Our Responsibility' project.

My Government has accorded utmost importance for the planned, scientific and systematic development of Sabarimala in an eco friendly manner. Till date my Government has sanctioned Rs 52 crore for implementing the various projects as envisaged in the Master Plan. The Union Government has been addressed to declare Sabarimala as a national pilgrim centre.

Transparency, citizen centric governance and zero tolerance towards corruption are the hallmark of my Government. Already the Right to Services has been implemented in all government departments ensuring timely delivery of services to the citizens. All measures will be taken to uproot corruption from State.

My Government believes that Human Resource is the greatest asset of any State. In this age of information technology, what is required is transformation of the human resource into high performing individuals adding value to the society by delivering quality service to the common man. My Government believes that more than the software and hardware, it is the human-ware, which is the most important element. My Government is committed to

implementing transparent and paperless office in governance. Towards this, e-office has been implemented in ten Departments in the Secretariat. This will be extended to all other departments in the Secretariat by the next year. The Secretariat will be modernized with a modular computer network by upgrading Secretariat Wide Area Network. My Government will implement e-office in all government departments in a phased manner for giving services to the common man on a 24x7 basis by building capacity of the human resources across the various departments and providing the required infrastructure. The e-tendering platform has been made mandatory for all Government procurement above Rs. 25 lakh. My Government will reduce the slab for e-tendering to Rs.5 lakh.

Already a historic initiative has been taken to form the Kerala Administrative Service (KAS). My Government believes that a contented workforce is the greatest strength and my Government will do all that is possible to address the genuine grievances and concerns of the employees. At the same time the concerns of the common man should be the first priority of all concerned and lets us work towards making Kerala really a "Gods own e-state"

As is told by the great Tamil sage Thiruvalluvar "Eiyattralum eettalum katthalum katha vakutthalum vallathu arasu" meaning good governance is one, which pools the resources optimally, convert the resources into wealth effectively, protect the produced wealth securely and expend the wealth judiciously for the maximum benefit of the people of the State. I am happy to state that my Government is a role model for the entire country in this regard. Let us all work towards the goal of good governance with unity of thought, word and deed.

Ellavarkum Ente Aashamsakal, Nanni, JAI HIND ■

National Theatre Festival Kerala 2015

A Classical Visual Treat

The primary role of the theatre is to inform, entertain, persuade and provide means for connecting people. Now a days Indian theatre is very much alive. Theatre has been used for addressing social evils, social progress and for bringing various changes in the society. Apart from this the contemporary playwrights try to portray the psychological trauma being experienced by man as a social being. The national ethos and cultural patterns in the different parts of the country could be brought out only by organising a

national theatre festival. The Information Public Relations Department of Kerala government has undertaken this arduous task in a befitting manner at Kozhikkode.

The 14th National Theatre Festival 2015 was held at Kozhikkode from 16 to 21 February. Altogether there were 18 plays out of which 10 was from Kerala. The plays from other states include; West Bengal, Punjab, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and New Delhi. The Minister for Information and Public Relations K C Joseph inaugurated the

festival in presence of a massive crowd.

Each play was unique in its concept and presentation. Thematically, some of the plays are worthwhile for discussion. The opening play of the festival 'Long March' was written by Probir Guha and directed by Subhadeep Guha for Alternative Living Theatre, Kolkata. This play is based on the historical differences between the two sects of people that divide our planet, the haves (Rabbits) and the have nots (Tortoises). As the tradition goes, a race is run among the two sects of inhabitants.

This play questions the proverb 'slow and steady wins the race'. The Play, Daivam Veendum Thettidharikkunnu, written by Omchery N.N. Pillai and directed by A.Retnakaran unveils the hideous and unworthy backstage dramas taking shape in the name of demigods and beliefs in a world where even channels and other media circulate such social evils.

Jalam (water) is a play by Samudra, a leading dance group in Kerala, depicted the annihilation of life due to the insufficiency of pure water. It is scripted and choreographed by Madhu





Gopinath and Vakkam Sajeev. Moment Just Before Death is scripted and directed by Liju Krishna. The play brings home the Old man's passage through various facets of his life by incorporating props, images and dimensions of visual plane to envisage a theatre of experience and examination.

The Licence is a play based on a text written by Saadat Hasan Manto with certain references from Bertolt Brecht story The Job. The play directed by Neelam Mansingh Chaudhry mainly focuses on the process of roles assigned

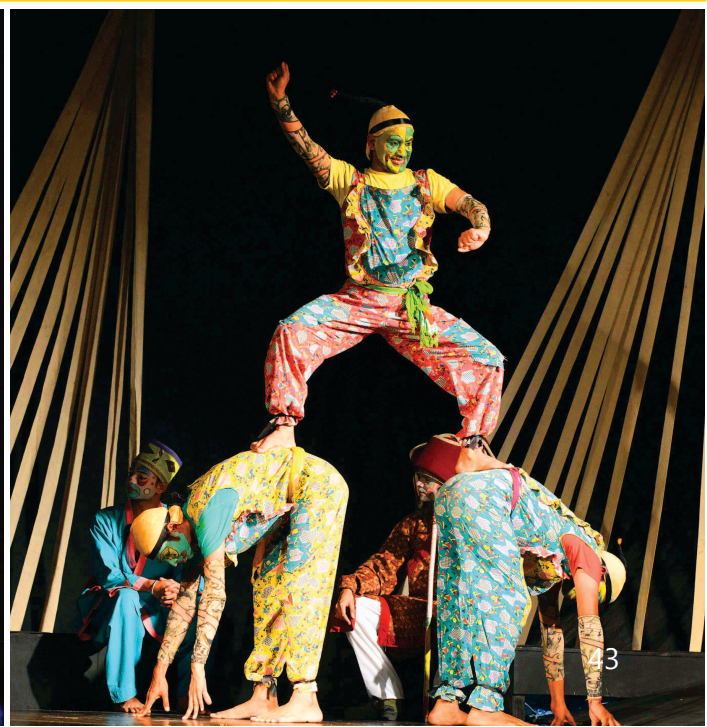
to women in the male dominated society. Both these stories talk about the implication on people in an economy that is industrialising at a fast pace. CHIMERA (Khai-me-re) is a Malayalam play based on the short story 'The Wall' written by Jean Paul Sartre. According to Greek mythology chimera is a monstrous fire breathing creature, perceived as riotously imaginative and implausible. Here the title Chimera symbolizes the dreadful human situations and their existential outlook. The drama attempts to examine the

dilemma of reconciling freedom with mortality. The play is scripted by Aromal.T and directed by Hazim Amaravila for Kanal Samskarika Vedhi, Thiruvananthapuram.

Ore Oru Thanal, written and directed by Amal Raj Dev deals with the importance of nature and its preservation for the generations to come. The play promotes the motto 'Thanal (shade) is a gift and happiness. We can't think of life without 'Thanal'. We thirst for the shade when we are melting under the burning sun'. Rickshaw Amasung Nangmei

(Rickshaw and Gun), the Manipuri play directed by Dr. S. Thaninleima clearly depicted the present condition of Manipur. Poirei, man character of the play, drives his cycle rickshaw every day. While driving his rickshaw from one place to another poirei encounters in the chaotic environment a number of happenings which gave him pain to his heart. It is not just the story of the protagonist but the story of the real Manipuri life.

Njyazarzhcha (The Sunday) is written by James Elia and directed by Shaiju Anthikkad, presents the





story of Sr. Angelina, who is excommunicated by the church. The play explores the attitude of the society, family and church towards a woman caught in an unprecedented predicament. Saudagar, the play from Bhopal, directed by Bansi Kaul based on Bertolt Brecht's *Exception and the Rule* is adapted and translated into Hindi by Shrikant Kishore. Saudagar basically depicts how the system in which we live rules in favour of the 'bigger man', always shrugging off the poor and the deprived. The play speaks

metaphorically of how the first world countries have hollowed out the pre-existing societies under the sham of discovery and modernization.

Kasumal Sapno is an adaptation of William Shakespeare's romantic-comedy. This play portrays the adventure of four young lovers in an imaginative garth of Amrogarh, somewhere in Rajasthan. The play is directed by Ajeet Singh Palawat for The Ujjagar Dramatic Association, Jaipur.

Chakka is a powerful satirical play that expresses the hazards caused by

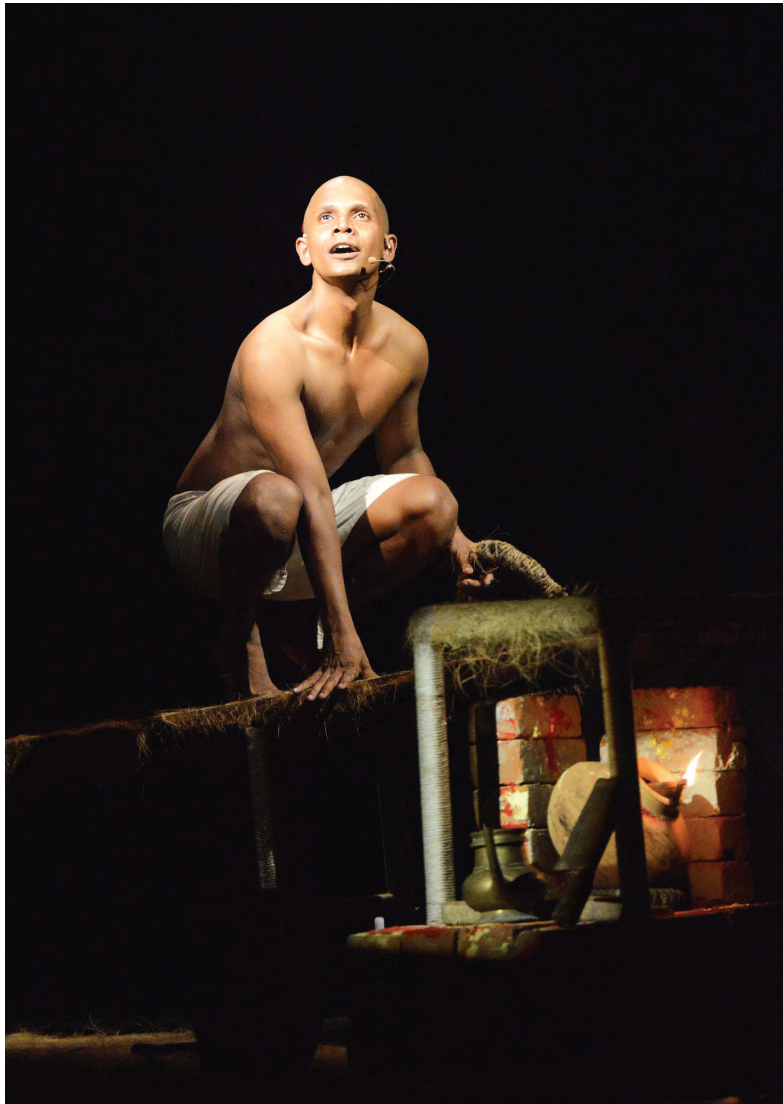


globalisation and free-market economy which destroys the social, cultural and economic identity of a society, 'Chakka', (Jackfruit), presents the images of the collapse of a village economy, by the intervention of market forces. Beginning with the almost idyllic images of a village life, marked by the normal petty neighbourly squabbles, 'Chakka', moves through the lives of two villagers who used to make a good living by selling jackfruits to the fellow villagers. An attempt has been made to create a theatrical language that

corresponds to the simplicity and transparency of the original language of Thuppettan (M.S. Namboothiri), the playwright, that it easily accessible to even to most rustic audience. The play is being designed to be presented as an intimate theatre, to an audience of a maximum number of 300 persons, seated on both sides of the performances space which is on the same level with the audience seating. Use of live music and song rendered by the actors add to the intimate experience. The play is directed by C.R. Rajan, K.B.

Hari, Prabalan Velloor.

Kuzhi Vettunnavarodu (The Coffin is Too Big For The Hole) is an allegorical narration of the dream experienced by a Grandson of a grand old man of high principles. The bad dream of the Grandfather's funeral function repeatedly haunts the Grandson. He narrates this nightmare. Kuzhivettunnavarodu is adapted from the narrative play written by Singaporean playwright Kuo Pao Kun. His plays are expressions of resistance against Singapore's socio-political milieu of the 80's. Needless to say, he was detained



Gabarghichor. This play is written by Bhikhan Thakur. Thirumbi Vandhan Thampi consists of a play inside of it. The play inside the play is the life of Veluthambi Dhalawa, a great patriot and warrior who fought against British supremacy, corruption and injustice in Travancore around two centuries before. The play is directed by Ashok Sasi for Prof. G. Sankarapillai Memorial Centre of Performing Arts, Venjaramoodu, Thiruvananthapuram.

The play 4.48 Psychosis is inspired from the works of Yoko Ono, John Lennon and especially Sarah Kane's '4.48 Psychosis'. During the performance, two bodies will be exploring the artist's life and death in the mediated spaces. This collaborative performance tries to explore the border lines between what we decide are comfortable and uncomfortable. The multilingual play is directed by Reji Prasad for Sarojini Naidu School of Arts and Communication, Hyderabad. The play Deerghachathuram (The Rectangle) is a real time, multimedia drama, presented in the backdrop of a reality show settings in a television studio. As in all Soorya Krishnamurthy's writings, and presentations, Ammu is the central character in this drama too. The writing probes into the rise and fall of a playback singer, who finally realises the great truth that there were presentations still in the paths abandoned by him.

The play Ghazab Teri Adaa is scripted and directed by Dr. Waman Kendre. It is inspired by Aristophanes Leastrata. The action of the play takes place in imaginary time and place which revolves around the never ending aspiration for the expansion of kingdom and is the constant battle for the continuous fights in the battle field. The play ends with the call for humanity and peace.

The theatre festival was noted for the massive participation of the public, not just as audience, but in the interactive sessions as well. One could find the crowd waiting patiently outside the halls for the door to open just 30 minutes prior to the show. The two indoor auditoriums; Tagore Theatre and Nalanda Auditorium, were often packed beyond its capacity all the days. All the plays irrespective of the language barrier were well received. Not just the festival, the face-to-face programmes and seminars on various aspects of theatre were also witnessed huge participation. By staging the entire plays in a unique and diversified ambiance of visual experience, the Information and Public Relations department can be proud of the impact created among the theatre lovers of Kerala. ■

The writer is faculty, Centre for Performing and Visual Arts, University of Kerala.

without trial for a few precious years by the State under the Internal Security Act. The play is directed by the eminent director Narippatta Raju.

The play Gabarghichor is directed by Pravin Kumar Gunjan of Bihar. This is about a 15 year old boy called

Gabarghichor who lives a content life in the village with his mother. His father used to work in the city and was not aware about his son until one man from the village told him. The story passes through an arduous battle to attain the parental rights over



Stop Killing People

is the voice of my theatre:
Thanin Leima

Manipuri stage director and playwright Thanin Leima was in Kerala recently with her much acclaimed play 'Rickshaw And Gun' which was on stage at the Tagore Theatre, Kozhikode as part of the 13th National Theatre Festival conducted by I& PRD. Leima, the product of NSD, is the first Manipuri to pass out of the Institute. *Kerala Calling* magazine had a tete-a-tete with the talented director during her hectic schedule.

How do you feel the Manipuri ambience for creative works? Is it conducive?

No. Not at all. We are going through tough times and these are not in any way good for the artistes. We often lack concentration on creative works. It is extremely disturbing to a creative person like me. Yet, without being bothered about the situation, I try to continue with my work. I consider theatre as the most powerful medium to fight against this unrest. I consider that it is my endeavour to make people understand about the real situation.

Is Manipuri theatre so powerful?

Undoubtedly. There are several good plays. There is no

dearth of talents on stage. However, the only problem we face is the recovery of the production cost even with a play of popular acceptance. Moreover, there are few options for advertising our plays. The greatest strength of Manipur is its rich tradition.

Manipuri theatre is in a transformation stage. Isn't it?

There you are. But it is gradual, from traditional to realistic. For subjects, there is no scarcity. The Manipuri soil is fertile with unexpected happenings whether it is virtuous or vicious. The playwrights are not alien to these events, which directly affect the people. Contemporary issues are

staged with valiance. Here, theatre has been melodramatic and stylized with a lot of visual elements with its root in old Manipuri heritage.

Can you brief on Manipuri theatre?

The Manipuri Traditional theatre was started in 1779 by Maharaja Bhagyachandra, the then king of Manipur. He created MAHA RASA for the first time. All the stories were based on Lord Krishna and Radha. After the Rasa leela, there are other Leelas also. During the period of Chandrakirti Maharaja, Goura leela, Kangsabodha, Bal leela etc. were introduced.

In the year 1902, the colonial theatre (parsi theatre) was introduced in

Manipur which is brought by Bengali people. All the plays were performed only in Bengali language. In 1914, Manipuri translation from Bengali language was started and from that time onwards plays in Manipuri language started to be performed. All the stories of these plays are based on Hindu mythology and all these performances were at the Proscenium theatre. It was in 1925, Manipuri people started to write plays. The first play, which was written by a Manipuri is "Narasimha." This play is based on the history of Manipur. The Modern Manipuri Theatre was first created in the year 1972 by H. Kanhailal. This is also called as Alternative Manipuri Theatre.

On Manipuri Dramatic Union?

The Manipuri Dramatic Union has close association with the Manipuri Theatre history. In 1931, Manipuri people first established the theatre organisation called Manipur Dramatic Union (MDU). The first play produced by MDU is *Areppa Marup*, written and directed by S. Lalit Singh. This is considered as the first social play of Manipur. After this, plays based on social melodrama, historical, mythology, etc. were performed at proscenium theatre. This movement was very strong in Manipur and has been undergoing changes up to 1990.

Introduction of Realistic Theatre?

The western realistic drama was started to perform on proscenium stage in 1960. From this period, absurd, symbolism, surrealism, expressionism, and epic theatres were introduced. Not

only this, the courtyard theatre was also created during the period of 1926. This courtyard theatre was inspired by the traditional theatre, which performed at Mandav leela. The story has been taken from the folk legends of Manipur. This play which is known as "Moirang parva", is known as folk theatre of Manipur. This play was performed in open space.

Is Shumang Lila still popular?

Shumang Lila is a composite indigenous art form of the Manipuris, which informs, educates, entertains, persuades and motivates people on a variety of issues." During the period of 1950, modern courtyard theatre was created and is called SUMANG LEELA. Still SUMANG LEELA is very popular in Manipur. Thousands of people come to see *Sumang Leela* by buying ticket. Various government and non-government agencies have been judiciously

employing Shumang Lila to carry messages to the people. The themes were based on day-to-day affairs. It has playback singers, both male and female.

Do you face any difficulty as a woman director?

As a woman director, I faced so many difficulties. Due to jealousy on me as a woman theatre director, my big working space gets burned by unknowns. But I didn't bother. I took this as a challenge and going on.

The themes you prefer?

Most theatre directors in the North East borrow their text from mythological stories and the Indian epics. Instead, I always take up the social issue for my creative production. That's how 'I Am Not Mad' happened. How can a creative artist be silent when an entire community of women marched naked in the city? The play *Rickshaw and Gun* focuses on a disturbing trend in the state. It depicts the struggle of the common man to survive. The theme I prefer is "everybody wants to

survive as a human being with humanity " this is a broad idea. A voice to "stop killing people " is the voice of my theatre now.

What about Indian theatre in the International scenario?

Indian theatre can very well stand in international scenario. We have stalwarts like Kavalam Narayana Panikar(Kerala), Ratan Thiyam(Manipur), Habib Tanvir(Chattisgarh), Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry (Punjab), etc. They are all well received by International audience. They have great visions for theatre. According to me, the only drawback of Indian theatre is though it is really strong artistically and theatrically, it is technologically very poor.

On Kerala Theatre

Kerala has a strong cultural background. Traditional theatre was very strong here. The movement of Malayali theatre is also very strong. Large number of theatre directors are working here. Moreover, all kinds of international theatre trends can be found here. ■



Salvias

Summer bouquets in the garden

Salvias now are the current new trend in gardens, mainly because of their tolerance for long dry spells in our climate. Salvias are well known for their resilience in hot climate. They are easy to grow, bloom abundantly, and provide great look for the landscapes. With

its jewel tone colours Salvia is suited for mixed perennial borders, country style gardens and rock gardens. The Salvias are part of a large genus (*Salvia*) of plants in the Mint family with more than 900 named species worldwide. They have been grown as garden plants for a very long time stretching

back many centuries. Another interesting fact is that *Salvia* is known to many people as a friend in culinary use since the leaves of the common sage plant, a member of this group named *Salvia officinalis* is used as a herb with its tasty flavour and aroma in cooking. The group of Salvias include annuals, biennials, perennials and shrubs. Generally flowering Salvias produce spikes or whorls of small densely packed flowers atop aromatic foliage. These heat and drought tolerant beauties bloom from early to late

summer in colours of blue, mauve, red, pink and white.

Since Salvias originate from different regions around the world, there are different species also suited for growing in different climates which means they can grow in a wide range of conditions, soils and situations. Depending upon the variety *Salvia* will grow from eight inches to three feet tall. Now let us have a look into the notable charming species of *Salvia* grown as annuals.

Salvia splendens

Salvia splendens or the scarlet sage is a herbaceous perennial plant native to Brazil. Perhaps this is the most commonly grown ornamental *Salvia* species. This is a standard garden reliable bloomer which is tall (60 to 90 cm) or dwarf (20 to 30 cm) bushy. The

flowers can be white, salmon, purple as well as traditional red in colour and the leaves being bright to dark green, elliptical and toothed. Flaming red is the signature colour of this striking, fragrant plant. This will easily grab the attention of a garden lover since the



intense colour and large flower spikes makes it stand out in the landscape. Flowers grow on upright spikes and are two-lipped with a flat lower lip and helmet-shaped upper lip. Flowers are borne on square stems above the foliage. Red salvia plants can be grown in a sunny area with a loamy well drained soil. To improve their looks and encourage better flowering deadhead Red salvia plants. Pinch off the flower spikes with spent blooms. This species can form a striking accent when grown together in mass as bedding plants or lined up in a row as edging plants. They are also good container plants. The main varieties include "Salsa series" which have a height of 1.5' producing flowers with shades of red, purple, pink and white. Bicolours are also available with red, rose or salmon coloured flowers with white tips. There is another "Fire cracker series" which is dwarf and compact where the flowers are of blue, orange, white, pink and bicolours. These bloom continuously. The "Bonfire series" have bright red flowers. The "Red Arrows" have spikes of large brilliant red flowers. St. Johns Fire (30cm), Fire Dwarf, Blaze of Fire (30cm), scarlet Pygmy (20cm) are dwarf and early varieties. Bonfire (60-90cm), Fireball (30-45cm), Harbinger (45cm), Scarlet Queen (60cm), Crimson, King and Violet Queen are the tall growing varieties.

Salvia coccinea

Salvia coccinea is a very popular salvia grown in South India. It is also known as blood sage due to its scarlet coloured flowers. The plant grows to 75cm in height with many branches and a spread of 0.75m. Cultivated varieties include orange-red, salmon, pink, white and scarlet and include bi-coloured varieties with small flowers produced in long terminal spikes. The plant grows well in full sun but can tolerate intermittent shade. This is a good bedding plant and useful in borders. The commonly grown varieties are Red Indian, Pink Pearl and White Dove.



Salvia patens



covered lightly with sand and leaf mould. The seeds germinate two weeks after sowing. The seedlings are transplanted into permanent beds when they develop first true leaves. Mulch the soil around Salvias to keep roots cool and moist. Flowering starts within 3 to 3 1/2 months after sowing. Dead head the plant according to requirement to encourage branching and flowering. Salvias gained much popularity among garden lovers as they come in all sizes, all flower colours, many different foliage textures and many different fragrances. All varieties of Salvia attract lots of sunbirds who come to feed on the nectar along with honeybees and butterflies. Red Salvias can be used as a focal point in any garden. They combine easily with most of the commonly grown annuals also.

Salvia patens is a perennial variety growing to 30-75cm tall bearing long spikes of bright blue flowers. Cambridge Blue and Lavender Lady are two important varieties.

Salvia is ideal for growing in mass, in beds, borders, pots, as background in rock gardens, accents and cut flowers. The plant generally like a rich soil or potting mixture of loam and manure in the ratio 1:1. Salvias prefers liberal watering. Apart from seeds these can be raised by cuttings or division of clumps. When propagation is by way of seeds they are sown with great care and

Salvias get their name based on the Latin word "salvere" means "to save". The plant has been widely used for its healing properties. The ancient Greeks used it to treat ulcers and snake bites. It also has anti-inflammatory properties. A tea from aromatic sage (Salvia officinalis) is used to stop coughs. This can be used as a gargle to treat an inflamed mouth, sore throat and gingivitis.

woman adores a Fascist," Plath asserts that, while the archetypal male figure appearing in the rest of the poem (as father and lover) connotes the escape from freedom through sadism, the female figure's adoration of the Fascist is an extreme result of a stereotypically feminine escape from the feelings of aloneness associated with freedom, through masochistic strivings. Freedom, for the archetypal "feminine" figure in "Daddy," is freedom from the authoritarian father figure. Political realities (in the form of Nazism) and psychological difficulties (in the form of neurosis) are inescapably linked here. Plath's lines in "Daddy" are both psychological and political. They are psychological not because "Daddy" is about Plath's relationship with her father, but in the sense that Plath uses the situation depicted in the poem to explore the dynamics of her attitude toward individualism.

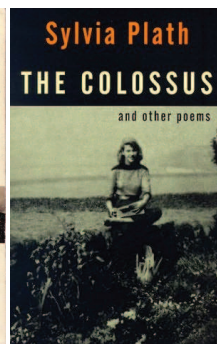
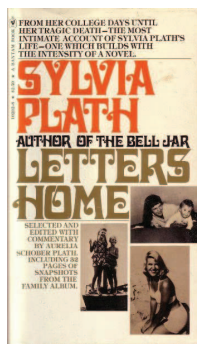
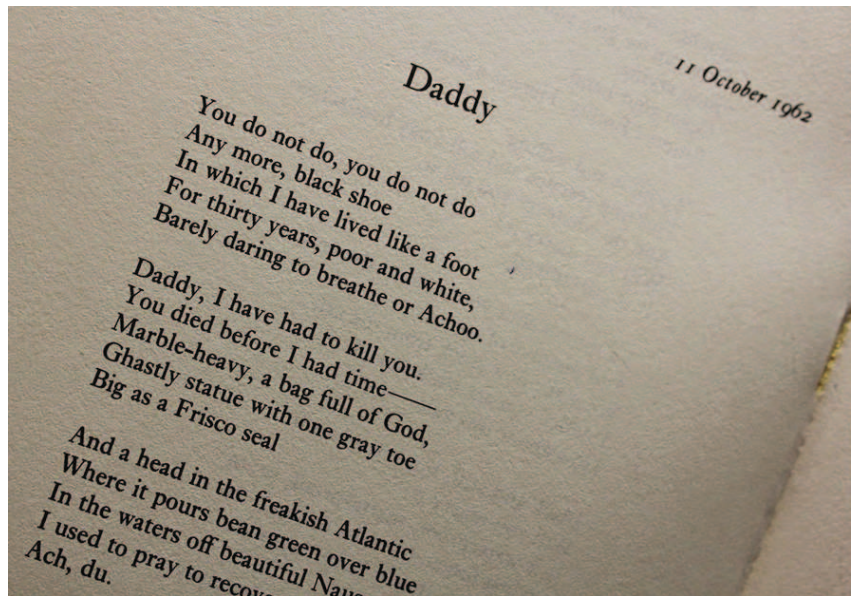
There are numerous occasions where Sylvia mercilessly attacks her father, the symbol of aggression and obsession for her. "daddy, I have to kill you," "Back shoes" "You" these allusions refer to an innate urge to take vengeance and at the same time an inmate bond.

This vengeance and obsession goes on with using harsh words like "a ghostly statue", a Nazi German, A man-crushing engine, a tank driver, A swastika symbol of the Nazi, a devil, a haunting ghost and a vampire etc.

Sylvia compares herself as a Jew and her father a Nazi German. Her thirty years of brief life is compared to that in a Nazi concentration camp ie male . She wants to escape from it but it seems impossible for her because "Every woman adores a fascist". And, this contradiction may have laid her in neurosis throughout her life. This is seen in the lines:

Bit my pretty red heart in two
I was ten when they buried you
At twenty, I tried to die
And get back, back, back to you.
(Daddy)

The death of her father at her tender age is the root cause of her



depression. She has no escape from this father fixation. Revenge and affection go hand in hand. Sylvia made her first attempt on suicide at twenty by overdosing sleeping pills. Her love affair with the noted English poet Ted Hughes is also a mixture of revenge and affection. The poetic words of Ted Hughes about his first meeting with Sylvia are classic ones. He tried to capture her in his camera:

Pool first sight (sight of her eyes)
First snapshot isolated (about her beautiful ears)



Unalterable stilled in the camera's glare (about her pretty smile)

I see you there clear
More real than in any of the years
in its shadow
As if I saw you ones and never
again!

Though they got married, it ended in failure. Sylvia had suspicion about Hughes fidelity to her.

I made a model of you
A man in black a Meinkampf look
(Daddy)

This model is none other than Ted Hughes himself. To her this is another German, with the trademark meinkampf look, obviously to frighten her but unable to escape from that obsession. Now her anger and love traverses to both of them.

If I have killed one man, I have killed two

The vampire who said he was you
To her, the male dominant world is a world of Vampires!

The theme of the female protest is perhaps the most striking symbolic meaning in the poem. The female represents the creative force (obviously it is) and is angry with the destructive force i.e. male dominance.

Out of the ash
I rise with my red hair
And eat men like air! ■

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