



COVER STORY

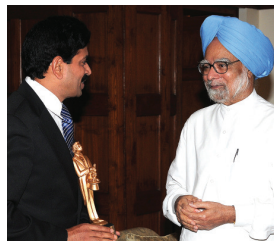
- 18 **Leap in 30 days** Deepika Suseelan
- 22 **Initiatives Postive and Transparent** S.R. Raveendran
- 24 **Recapturing the Glory** B. Harikumar
- 26 **Correcting the Past Mistakes** T C Chandrahasan
- 28 **Replenishing the Old Rice Bowl** Sudheesh Kaimal
- 29 **INTERVIEW Reviving the Ecology and Cultivation** R Venugopal
- 30 **EXCLUSIVE Thanneermukkom barrage to let more saline water upstream** Arvee



CURRENT

- 4 **Defining the Speed and Efficiency**
- 12 **Budget Balanced**

- 31 **FLORICULTURE**
The Flower of Peace
Suresh Muthukulam



- 32 **HONOUR**
Muthukad brings Merlin's glory for India
K P Sivakumar

- 34 **RESEARCH**
Control the Pest Control
Nisha S K

- 38 **ECOLOGY**
Infanticide of the Innocent
Joseph Kurien Pulikuthiel

- 40 **CULTURE**
Theatre innovative
N C Senan

- 44 **FILM REVIEW**
Violin Musical Love
Nasila Ratheesh

- 10 **MICROSCAN**

- 46 **HORIZON**
S Radhakrishnan

- 48 **ETHNIC FOOD**
Indu Narayanan



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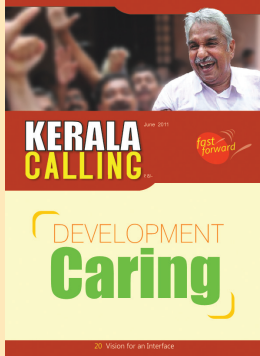
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RESPONSE



Editorial Materials

The 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

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VIEWs expressed in the articles published in *Kerala Calling* are not, necessarily, those of the Government. *Kerala Calling* welcomes free expression of divergent views and exchange of ideas through its pages.

Caring Development

The June 2011 issue of Kerala Calling carried a special emphasis on development. The people have shown their political will with a clear mandate for implementing a result-oriented action plan. It is to fulfil this social commitment that the UDF Government has sworn in power with a clear view to take up the mission of ushering in a new culture in administration and development of the State. A new vision and transparency would be infused in it. New path of development would be struck in all spheres of social welfare. The Government would set in motion clear programme of action which would prove their conformity with the public interest and democratic principles.

Jiji J.J.

Venganoor, Thiruvananthapuram

The scholarly article on the farmers of Wayanad, Guide the farmers to esteem', well portrays the dramatic shift of land use and the after effects of the same on the farmers of Wayanad. This is not just the case of Wayanad but the whole state is facing such a threat. As the article suggests, the concerned agencies should take immediate measures to use the land available scientifically with minimum ecological damage.

Shibu B.

Pulluvazhi, Perumbavoor

Vigorous and Vibrant

Congratulate Kerala Calling for its special focus on environmental issues. As a regular reader of the magazine I admit that the periodical duly maintains a very good standard. I also appreciate the vigorous and vibrant approach of your writers and they do justice to their subjects. The articles appeared in June 2011 issue 'Love the Lungs of Earth', 'The Humming Bird Vine;', "Overburry's Tolly an Evening Resort, 'Handloom Weave Policy Novel' etc. are highly interesting and instructive. The thought provoking article Mahakavi Appan, Fragrance never fading is really capable of refreshing mind and broadening our intellectual horizon.

Vaisakh V.

Karumom, Thiruvananthapuram

I am very thankful to the team Kerala Calling for publishing such a beautiful and informative magazine to the readers. The article, 'Love the Lungs of Nature' is very attractive and also through the content I can improve my language better. It is incontrovertible that it is the number one magazine. I wish you all the very best.

Anju S.

Bishop Hodges, HSS, Mavelikkara

Kerala Calling's layout and design is very attractive and eye-catching. Cover stories in every issue are fine and reader-friendly. The language is attractive. Keep it up.

Shaju Bhai, Kodoor, Malappuram
8606159090

I would like to congratulate team Kerala Calling. The magazine is really knowledgeable. It helps to know each and every pulsation and plan of the Government.

Shafeekh Kannanchery

Tanaloor, Thirur, Malappuram
9895292169

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Shaju Bhai

Kodoor, Malappuram 8606159090

EDITORIAL

On the Threshold of Prosperity

The United Democratic Front Government, in its maiden budget, expressed its resolve to wipe out the disarray in the functioning of the State finances of the past. Based on the principle that backwardness of even one individual could adversely affect the welfare of the whole society, the revised budget is presented with the vision that all economic activities of the Government should aim at development of the entire people of the State.

The budget envisages all over development of the state at par with the welfare of the needy. At the same time, it is not an all new budget. The Minister for Finance KM Mani has claimed the second budget in the current financial year a revised one. But he pointed out the fact that the debt liability sky rocketed to Rs. 88,887 crore, a growth of whopping 93 per cent from the last UDF Government. In fact Kerala is entangled in a dire situation of unemployment, industrial and agricultural stagnation, lack of adequate infrastructure etc. Amidst these constraints, the budget proposes inputs in the fields of agriculture, industry, water supply and infrastructure development. At the same time, investments in the social sector viz., health, education and welfare also would contribute the enrichment of human capital.

The budget comes forth with proposals to resolve a number of

burning issues the society is facing. Top priority has been given to settle the longstanding issues such as eviction of encroachers from Munnar, providing cultivable land to settlers of Chengara, rehabilitating the evictees of Moolampilly judiciously and above all, expressing solidarity with the victims of Endosulfan in Kasaragode district. At the same time, implementing the Kuttanad package with emphasise on environmental stabilisation is another milestone. Priority has also been given to a handful of Development Authorities with due prominence.

In fact, the new Government has already imprinted its hallmark of transparency by introducing live, round the clock web casting of the functioning of the Chief Minister's office. Thus, Kerala has become the first state in the country to open its cabins to public scrutiny. Through this gesture, the Government has moved further close to the people.

We devote this issue to the priorities, vision and also changes in the attitude and programmes of the new UDF Government. We solicit the invaluable suggestions and comments of the public on both the initiatives of the Government and *Kerala Calling* for improvisation.

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DEFINING

the Speed and Efficiency

Governor R.S. Gavai unveiling the policies of the new UDG Government. Excerpts of the speech delivered at the inaugural session of the newly formed Legislative Assembly

The people have a lot of expectations about the Government headed by Chief Minister Shri Oommen Chandy. I expect that he and his colleagues, driven as they are by the message 'Athivegam, bahudooram', will be able to rise to the expectations of the people, developing Kerala with care and compassion.'

It is just 38 days since my Government was sworn in, but I am extremely happy at the way that my Government acted during this period. The announcement of the 100 days programme and the most significant decision to publish the assets of all Ministers, their personal staff and families is path breaking and has been applauded across the country. This shows the determination of my Government to give the people of Kerala a transparent, corruption free government for the next five years.

Within this short period, my Government has positively acted on the long delayed relief to victims of Endosulfan in Kasaragode. Similarly, the steps taken to solve the problems of those evicted in Moolampally also need to be appreciated.

Major infrastructural projects that will have a long standing impact on the state have been taken out of cold storage and being acted upon. These include the Kochi Metro, Kannur airport and Vizhinjam seaport projects. These and other similar projects that will be implemented over the next five years will take Kerala through one of its best periods.

I am proud that my Government has a clear vision and specific aims about the future of the state. My Government will aim for sustainable development in tune with the balance and rhythm of nature. The outlook of my Government will be to devise programmes for cautious development without sacrificing the interests of the poor. My Government shall give priority to creating jobs by transforming Kerala to an investment friendly state, improving the law and order situation, controlling price rise, ending the social malaise of alcohol in a phased manner and developing infrastructure.

To achieve food security, my Government has identified area expansion through fallow land cultivation, upland cultivation and productivity enhancement as thrust areas. Timely harvest and procurement of paddy will be assured by providing adequate machinery and fair procurement price. As many farmers are returning to coconut cultivation, owing to improved prices, my Government proposes to give more stress on increasing production through adopting cluster approach of coconut growers.

It is proposed to undertake vegetable development programme in each panchayat by organising farmers' groups. The major activities proposed for the year are commercial cultivation of vegetables as pure crop, cultivation of

vegetables in fallow lands, in homesteads and in vacant land available in private and public institutions.

Under the Kuttanad package, equipment including petty and para sets, combine harvesters, tractors with accessories and power tillers will be purchased in consultation with the farming community. Custom hiring cum training centres will be established in Alappuzha, Kottayam and Patbanamthitta districts.

The well appreciated Kerala model of Public Distribution System (PDS) will be strengthened further by opening more retail outlets. Steps have already been taken to distribute 25 kgs. of rice per month to BPL families at Rs.1 per kg. by Onam.

Government of India is expected to endorse the project costing Rs.354 crores for distribution of 15 items of essential commodities through ration shops at a price at least 10 per cent below the open market price, as it is highlighted as an effective market intervention exercise to check escalation of prices of essential commodities. My Government will take all efforts to establish more godowns and warehouses, particularly in the locations like Arakkulam in Idukki, Meenangadi in Wayanad district and Purakkad in Alappuzha district. My Government will encourage open market sales scheme of food grains as a part of the effort to curb escalation of price of food grains,

seventy five existing Maveli Stores will be converted to super markets. Furthermore, ten super markets will be converted to People's Bazaars providing modern shopping facilities.

A neglected area in fishermen welfare so far has been the plight of peeling workers. A comprehensive package will be prepared to ensure their hygiene, health and safety. My Government will initiate a Distress Relief Fund to marine fishermen for compensating the losses to their craft and gear due to rough sea and rough weather. This is needed because at present the losses due to rough sea are not included in the list for assistance under the Natural Calamity Relief Fund.

My Government is committed to making the Police Force more effective, responsive, accountable and helpful. Any criminal tendency within the Police Force will be dealt with firmly. We are determined to take a serious view of crimes against women, and decisive action will be taken in such cases. The existing Janamaithri Police Scheme will be extended to new police stations in a phased manner.

My Government shall undertake institutional reforms to prevent custodial deaths and take stringent action against those found guilty. Police reforms aimed at bringing in a new ethos that respects the legal rights of the citizens and human rights will receive the immediate

attention of my Government.

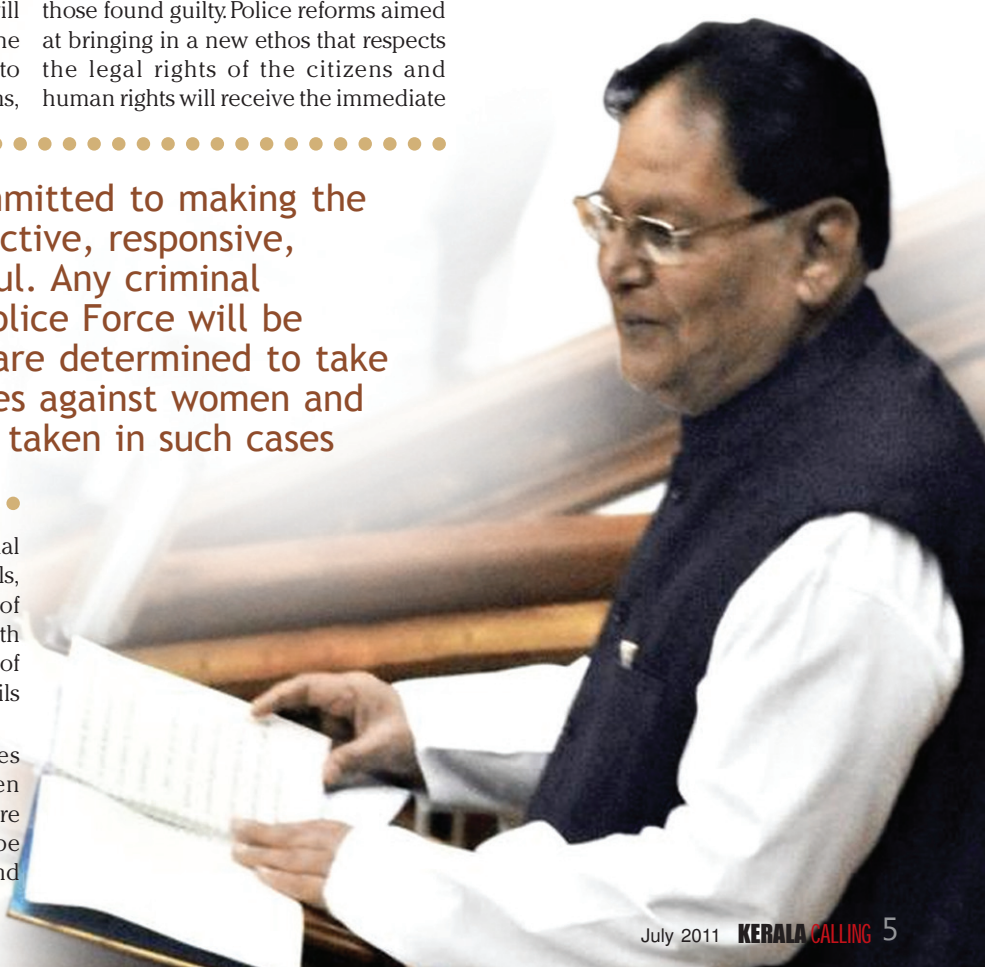
The objective of my Government is to bring accelerated economic development of the State drawing upon its strengths and resources. The aim is to create a new, result oriented model of development, viewing Kerala as a single unit. A Committee, chaired by the Chief Minister will provide the required leadership in this direction. Industrial development is a dynamic matter that requires continuity in order to bear fruit. Inclusive economic growth without compromising on ecology and environment will be the goal. De-bottlenecking infrastructure, opening up new areas for growth, easing the process of entrepreneurship and making available land for projects will ensure that the growth is in the desired direction. We will be focusing on the emerging areas of Education, Health, Tourism, IT, Commerce, Retail, Bio Technology, Communication etc. as against certain sunset sectors to ensure sustained economic growth of the State and employment generation for the young people.

KINFRA and KSIDC will strengthen their crucial role of providing developed land, infrastructure, funding and assistance in getting clearances for both

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to enable food grain sale at concessional rates to bulk consumers like hospitals, schools and hostels. Moreover, linking of identification of ration card holders with the Unique ID Project of Government of India by inclusion of fingerprint details in the ration cards is also envisaged.

The Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation (SUPPLYCO) will open supermarkets at seven places. Ten more mobile Maveli Stores are proposed to be opened during the financial year, and



public and private investment into the state.

There will be no privatisation of PSU's in Kerala. Traditional sectors like handloom and cashew are the backbone of the industrial activity of the State. Many of the units in this sector are not doing well financially. But we will continue to support them to stand on their own feet.

My Government will work towards reviving the positive investment climate to make Kerala an IT investment friendly destination. The immediate priority will be to restructure the IT mission and technology parks so as to make them more effective and beneficial to the young and educated Keralites. We will also need to work on a war footing to ensure that the technology parks do not

at Kochi.


It is proposed to launch the "Kerala Coir Marketing Consortium" to promote marketing of coir and coir products in domestic as well as international markets. This is the first initiative being proposed in Public Private Partnership in a traditional sector with the participation of all stakeholders.

The Primary Agricultural Co-operative Banks and Primary Co-operative Agricultural and Rural Development Banks will give more loans for agricultural and allied activities. New schemes will be introduced for promoting the cultivation of Gandhakasala and Pokkali rice varieties and processing units will be opened. More Farmers' Service Centres will be opened. Special emphasis will be given

established by Kerala Feeds Ltd. Under the Kuttanad Package, a unit to manufacture densified fodder blocks will be established.

My Government proposes to improve the habitat of the wild animals by increasing water availability through the construction of check dams, water holes and enhancing the availability of forage by planting fruit and fodder trees species in degraded forests. Appropriate steps to be taken to reduce man-animal conflict by constructing barriers such as solar-power fencing, bio-fencing, trenching and walls. As a part of promoting tree growing in private lands, pattayam holders in assigned forest lands will be permitted to harvest trees grown by them on such lands.

At present there are a lot of problems



The Government is committed to take steps to strengthen the position of Malayalam as the first language in the state. It will take steps to establish a Malayalam University at Thunchan Parambu, Tirur within a short time

fall into a debt trap, by attracting companies to set up new units in the acquired lands. A new Information Technology Policy will be formulated immediately. As a continuation of the e-Governance initiative, my Government proposes to implement a Disaster Recovery site, and initiate other innovations like Digital Signature for electronic transactions and Cyber Forensic Lab for electronic fraud detection.

The development of technology parks at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode will be completed with all required infrastructure facilities which will increase the number of investors, export revenue and employment potential. Government will take effective steps for the successful implementation of the much delayed Smart City Project

to the consumer sector and more Neethi stores and Neethi medical stores will be opened. The co-operative sector will provide necessary funds as loan to the local bodies for implementing E.M.S. Housing Scheme.

My Government proposes to provide subsidy as 'Milk Production Incentive' for the cattle feed purchased by the farmer from the dairy co-operatives. 'Students Dairy Clubs' will be organised in high schools to encourage youth to take up dairying as a vocation and Dairy Science as a field of study.

It is proposed to establish a high-tech meat processing plant on joint venture basis in Chalakudy. It is also proposed to establish high-tech bull mother dairy farm units with open nucleus breeding systems at Kolahalamedu and Mattupetti. A goat feed manufacturing unit will be

both for the forest officials and elephant owners in implementing the Kerala Captive Elephants (Management and Maintenance) Rules, 2003. It will be suitably amended to make it simpler.

My Government is committed to take steps to strengthen the position of Malayalam as the first language in the state. My Government will take steps to establish a Malayalam University at Thunchan Parambu, Tirur within a short time.

The Noon Meal Scheme will be expanded to include students in the ninth and tenth classes. A scheme to provide Insurance cover to school students will be introduced. Ninety six schools, which are under up-gradation under Rashtriya Madhyamic Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA) project, will start functioning during the year. Selected vocational schools in the state will be

converted to model vocational schools.

The IT@school project has empowered 28,000 student school IT co-coordinators (SSITC's) in the state. By utilising the SSITC network, public awareness programmes on ICT literacy will be undertaken for the benefit of parents and general public.

IT@school project, in association with BSNL, will provide high speed VPN (Virtual Private Network) over broadband internet connectivity to schools and offices.

There is uncertainty prevailing regarding the admission and fee structure in self financing colleges, as in the previous year. My Government is determined to find a permanent solution to this issue, ensuring the concept of social justice. My Government is committed to establishing institutions of higher education in those regions of the state which do not acquire such academic facilities. A Research Park and Transportation Engineering Research Centre will be set up.

A Tribal Studies and Research Centre will be established at Chethalayam, Wayanad. Kerala Council for Historical Research proposes to establish a Contemporary History Archives of Kerala which aims to create and maintain an internet repository of data related to contemporary life of Malayalis across the world.

My Government proposes to implement a comprehensive health insurance scheme for all families below the poverty line. Steps will be taken to make available anti-cancer drugs at lowered prices. Life saving drugs will be purchased by Kerala Medical Services Corporation and distributed through Supplyco and Neethi medical stores at fair prices. A Homoeopathic Cancer Palliative Care Hospital will be established in Wandoor in Malappuram district.

My Government will work closely with national agencies towards prevention of diseases such as Chikungunia and dengue fever.

A state level Environment Impact Assessment Authority and Expert Appraisal Committee has been constituted. Kerala State Biodiversity Board proposes to launch a massive state level 'People's Biodiversity Register' - based awareness and training programme in each panchayat of the State, the first of its kind in the country.

My Government will formulate a

Housing Policy with emphasis on sustainable development of habitats in the state and to ensure equitable supply of land shelter and services at affordable prices for all income groups, with special focus on housing needs of the poor, marginalised and the disadvantaged. Foreign direct investment and investment from Non Resident Indians will be encouraged in the sector.

In order to achieve targets in the housing sector, my Government will form a Housing Finance Institution named "Kerala State Housing Development Finance Corporation", which will mobilise funds for various housing schemes.

An integrated development communication grid will be formed using the existing development communication facilities available within the Information and Public Relations Department, through which development news from grass roots level will be collected and distributed to mass media. The IT enabled grievance redressal mechanism will be strengthened. An IT enabled feedback system for collecting and processing the responses of the public on government activities will be established.

The Local Fund Audit Department will be computerised to equip it to meet the challenges faced during auditing. To strengthen the human resources in the Treasury Department, training programmes will be introduced.

The draw of lottery is now restricted to one per week which was seven per week earlier. Under no circumstances we will allow looting of our people by lottery mafia.

My Government intends to implement a comprehensive Labour Policy after taking into confidence the workers as well as employers and people of different walks of life. My Government intends to rejuvenate the ESI hospitals and dispensaries in consultation with Government of India and utilising the corporate social responsibility of various public sector undertakings, both in state and central sectors.

My Government is committed to the proper enforcement of labour laws and avert unhealthy practices. My Government is determined to put an end to this illegal practice of Nokkukooli. A district wise mechanism to address the issue of lightning strikes and similar issues will be set up. It is also proposed to safeguard the interest of migrant

workers and avoid their exploitation by introducing a registration system.

In continuation to the successful implementation of the health insurance scheme of RSBY & CHIS, a new state scheme called 'CHIS PLUS' which provides additional medical assistance to the tune of Rs.70,000 for the treatment of cancer, kidney and heart diseases will be started, which will cover 35 lakh families under RSBY & CHIS.

Government propose to implement scheme for providing welfare measures to NRK's who return home jobless, such as educational and marriage assistance, maternity benefits and assistance for performing funeral rites. About 2 lakh beneficiaries will be covered under the Aam Admi Bima Yojana during 2011-12.

The NORKA Centre, which will bring all agencies of NORKA Department together, will start functioning during this year. This will be an important step for bringing all facilities of NORKA under one roof for the convenience of NRK's. It is also proposed to start an NRI Business Centre in the building along with a call centre and help line for assisting NRK's.

NORKA-ROOTS will strengthen the recently established job portal for promotion of safe migration practices and ensuring good jobs overseas.

My Government is committed to completing the process of distributing land to the landless tribal families, and will expedite the steps taken in this regard. An integrated development programme for enhancing the livelihood security of primitive tribal population will be implemented. A demand based socio-economic development scheme will be undertaken in tribal colonies for achieving self sufficiency and total connectivity. Efforts will be taken to settle all land related issues related to the tribal population during this year.

The educational programme will be given more thrust, with new focus on skill development in trades that are in demand. For achieving this purpose, Government will establish centres for skill development.

My Government will focus on increasing power generation, reduction in transmission and distribution loss and quality power supply. For achieving this objective, small and micro hydel projects and assessed wind energy potential will be encouraged. "Energy Smart School" concept will be implemented in all the high schools through energy conservation clubs.

National Highways NH 49, NH 208, NH 212, NH 213 and NH 220 are included in the NHDP phase IV for developing to two lane with paved shoulders under DBFOT, through public private partnership for which action will be taken to appoint suitable concessionaires.

Government of Kerala is in the process of gearing up to host the 35th National Games. The major achievement of the Games will be the creation of new sports infrastructure in the form of Greenfield stadiums. The construction of the Games Village at Thiruvananthapuram to accommodate athletes and team officials, with private partnership will be a landmark development.

With a view to identify talented sports persons and to impart scientific training to groom them into truly world class players, Kerala State Sports Council has decided to establish Centre of Excellence for disciplines such as athletics, swimming, volleyball and basketball. It is also proposed to constitute Kerala State Sports Development Fund to help out sportspersons gain international exposure.

Kerala State Youth Welfare Board proposes to establish 'Youth Information and Assistance Centre' to assist youth with updated information.

It is proposed to introduce an electronic payment system in the Motor Vehicles Department, so that taxes, fees, cess and other charges can be paid by citizens online.

In order to prevent road accidents due to over speed of vehicles, at least 6 hand held radars will be deployed. To ensure the mechanical condition of vehicles, it is proposed to set up vehicle testing stations under the Motor Vehicles Department.

My Government is concerned about the financial situation of KSRTC, which is reporting losses of over Rs. 40 crores every month. During the current financial year, KSRTC will roll out 1,000 new buses, which will be operated on new sectors.

The World Bank aided 2nd Jananidhi Project will be launched during 2011-12, to the tune of Rs.1,200 crores. At least 250 panchayats spread over all the districts will be covered over next five years.

Government has made it clear that the safety of the people cannot be compromised and the construction of a new dam at Mullaperiyar is the only

solution. The matter is now before the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Survey and feasibility studies have been completed and the detailed project report for a new dam is being finalised.

The implementation of Kuttanad Package will be put on fast track. The Project Report for modernisation/renovation of Thanneermukkam Bund and Thottappally Spillway will be prepared and investment clearance from Government of India will be sought this year.

The question of extending National Waterway from Kollam - Kottappuram to Thiruvananthapuram and Kasargod will be taken up with Government of India.

My Government will take steps to strengthen cultural institutions so that they can focus on their objectives in a non-political manner. After the success of the first phase of digitisation launched

A comprehensive campaign, with wide public participation and involvement of local governments, public persons and NGO's will be launched, which will work towards the goal of a 'garbage free Kerala (Maalinya muktha Keralam)'.

by the Department of Archives, it is proposed to launch a Mega Digitisation Project. A Theological Archives drawing on documents from various religious institutions is also proposed.

My Government is firmly committed to clear all encroachments on government land in all parts of the state including Munnar. Government is of the view that land owner whose land is acquired for public purpose should get his dues and that families should not be rendered homeless through the land acquisition process. Keeping this in mind, a practical, economically viable and humane resettlement and rehabilitation policy is being drafted in the State. The policy will ensure that the

erstwhile land owner remains a stakeholder in the project that comes up on the acquired land.

My Government intends to expedite the joint surveys to be conducted by Revenue and Forests Departments with a view to provide pattayams to eligible persons living near forests. The joint surveys will also enable speedy implementation of the work to construct 'jandas' demarcating forest areas from private holdings. Based on the Forest Rights Act, 2006, record of rights will be provided to about 32,800 families after necessary verification and survey.

My Government is committed to implement the Sabarimala Master Plan with a view to improving the quality of pilgrimage and providing better facilities to the pilgrims. My Government will take up a programme called 'Jala Samrudhi' Temple Pond Reclamation Programme by pooling resources available under NREGS, Devaswom Boards and other sources.

My Government intends to initiate an action plan for centralising the registration data in the State Data Centre and to digitise the register volumes of sub registry offices, to ensure greater transparency and authenticity.

My Government is committed to nurture the process of decentralisation, which is reaching the final stage of its maturity. My Government proposes to leverage the opportunity afforded by the World Bank supported Kerala Local Government Service Delivery Project to add value and quality to the institutionalisation process.

The aim of my Government is to clean up and transform the cities into clean, hygienic and green spaces, with the association of local self government institutions and non-governmental agencies. A comprehensive campaign, with wide public participation and involvement of local governments, public persons and NGO's will be launched, which will work towards the goal of a 'garbage free Kerala (Maalinya muktha Keralam)'.

Kudumbashree Mission has received international acclaim. Its primacy as an organisation of the poor to improve their livelihood will be maintained. Non-governmental organisations and all other self help groups in the field of rural sustainable development will also be given all encouragement. As a policy, focus would be on inclusion of the excluded groups especially the

Scheduled Tribes, traditional fisher folk and neighbourhood groups of the differently-abled and network them so as to empower them to access their entitlements.

My Government will strive to improve performance of the flagship centrally sponsored schemes. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme will be made more productive focusing on works capable of providing more employment to the poor and improving rural infrastructure and agricultural activities.

My Government is committed to the formation of Hill Area Development Authority and the Coastal Area Development Authority for the overall development of backward areas. The Hill Highway Project, kept in cold storage in the last five years, will be taken up for implementation expeditiously.

It is the policy of Government to root out corruption completely in local governments. For this, disclosure laws will be made more elaborate and independent social audit expanded. The Ombudsman system will be further fortified by making it a three member body.

Khadi and Village Industries Board has taken steps to strengthen the khadi sector by providing incentive to khadi spinners and weavers throughout the State. It is proposed to disburse adequate funds as margin money grant, that will benefit more than 5,450 beneficiaries during the year.

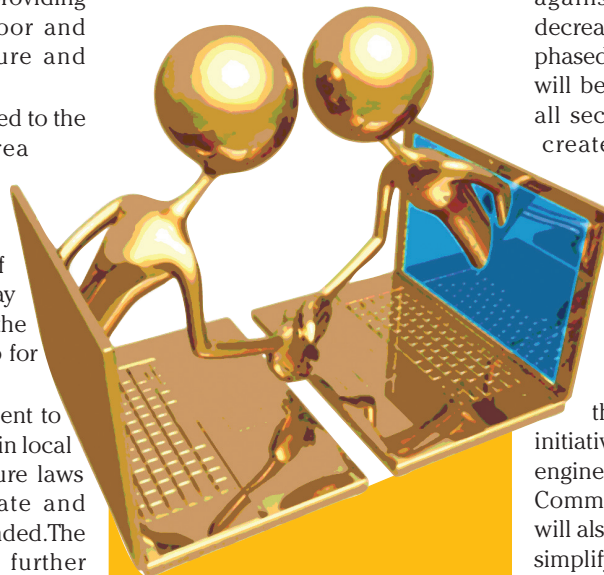
In order to give direction and thrust for the future development of the Tourism sector, my Government will formulate a Tourism Policy, giving importance to investment friendly schemes, financial assistance, tax exemption and infrastructure development. A special tourism package for the tourism industry in Malabar region. The Responsible Tourism initiative will be expanded throughout the State with the help of local bodies, tourism stakeholders and the public.

Weekly adalat and mega adalat on second Saturdays, special awareness programmes to Kudumbasree members, constitution of para legal volunteers in all legal authorities and establishment of legal aid clinics in universities are some of the major programmes to be undertaken during the current year.

The focus of the Social Welfare

Department is to provide succour to sections of society who are unable to access entitlements available to the mainstream. It is proposed to set up a Child Rights Commission whose primary responsibility will be the protection of children's rights to safety, happiness and the opportunity to grow.

My Government is of the view that the denial of the three per cent quota in



Despite the daunting challenges and numerous problems, I can assure you that my Government can rise up to the aspirations of the citizens, and perform at the speed and efficiency that the people of Kerala demand of us.

government posts for the differently-abled is cruel and inhumane. We will take speedy steps to recruit such persons and clear the backlog within the shortest possible time.

My Government will formulate a State nutrition policy delineating the milestones to be achieved in the area of nutrition, and the responsibilities to be assigned to various stakeholders.

Government will also focus on the problems of the elderly, keeping in view the rising numbers in the geriatric age population, and formulate special schemes for their care and support.

My Government intends to reorient the functioning of the Excise Department from an income earning department to one with social commitment by initiating a series of programmes and campaigns against alcoholism. Our aim is to decrease the availability of alcohol in a phased manner. A revised Abkari Policy will be spelt out after discussions with all sections. A separate wing will be created within the department for effective implementation of awareness programmes against liquor and drugs. The department also proposes to form de-addiction / rehabilitation centres in selected government hospitals.

My Government emphasises the importance of e-Governance initiatives and Government Process Re-engineering to increase efficiency in the Commercial Taxes Department which will also ensure transparency, apart from simplifying processes.

Ports with large development potential have been selected for development on public private partnership basis. Vizhinjam International Container Trans-shipment Terminal is a high priority project for my Government. The revised Phase I project cost is estimated at Rs.4,040 crores. The proposed bankers' consortium will be activated to ensure financial linkage for the project. A private partner for the implementation of Vizhinjam port project will be selected soon.

An Agreement has been signed for leasing out waterfront and port land at Beypore Port for constructing dedicated wharf facilities and a passenger terminal exclusively for Lakshadweep traffic.

The foregoing pronouncements and action points would demonstrate the resolve and vision of my Government to bring accelerated development to the State. I am confident that my Government has the capacity to transform these into practical programmes. Despite the daunting challenges and numerous problems, I can assure you that my Government can rise up to the aspirations of the citizens, and perform at the speed and efficiency that the people of Kerala demand of us.

JAI HIND ■



Bungled escape in a Bag

A Mexican prisoner tried to escape from jail by packing himself into the suitcase of his girlfriend. Both were caught by the jail guards. The guards grew suspicious when the woman seemed nervous as she wheeled out the building bag after a conjugal visit with the prisoner. They opened the luggage and found the prisoner folded into the foetal position. He and his girlfriend face criminal charges over the bungled escape.

മലയാളം

Malayalam made first language in schools

It is agreeable that the Middle Ages witnessed catches of larger and longer lived species of fish, unlike the present day fishes. A research by scientists from Wildlife Conservation Society has revealed that fish communities in the present era contain a lesser number of long-lived species as they tend to live fast and die young. Science reports the main finding of a recent study by researchers in Kenya.

The study was conducted by drawing a comparison between recently caught fish in coastal Kenya and the bones of fish in the ancient Swahili leftovers. The aim was to find out ways to renovate the existing line of fisheries. The study made use of more than 5,475 samples of ancient fish refuses in the period of AD 750-1400.

Present day fishing communities tend more towards overfishing. This results in a transit of the ecosystem which doesn't seem to be easily revertible. They also contain many species with shorter life spans and which tend to grow at a faster rate. They also have smaller average sizes and lesser number of top predators.



Live fast and die young is the fate of present fish communities

“The ancient Swahili Middens represent a time capsule of data, containing information on the composition of the region’s fish assemblages and how human communities influenced the marine environment. The historical data suggest that fishing removes the slower-growing, longer-lived species over time and that marine protected areas are only partially successful in recovering the fish communities of the past,” commented McClanahan, WCS Senior Conservationist and head of the WCS’s coral reef research and conservation programme.

The State Government has issued an order on making Malayalam the first language from the current academic year. In all schools across the state, Malayalam will be the first language upto Class X. In linguistic minority areas where Kannada or Tamil is the mother tongue, the present arrangement of studying the mother tongue as the first language will continue. However, these students should study Malayalam as the second language. This will be applicable to oriental schools also. The extra period needed for studying Malayalam should be found either by reducing the lunch interval or by working after school time.

Though the previous Government has decided to make Malayalam the first language, further proceedings were interrupted. Sukumar Azhikode, Sugathakumari and ONV Kurup demanded the status for many years. Kerala has stepped up its presence for conferment of classical status to Malayalam. Malayalam is the only South Indian language that has been denied the classical status.



KC Joseph, Minister for Information and Public Relations, releases the third edition of the book *Sree Padmanabha Temple* by handing over a copy to poet B. Sugathakumari. Uthradom Thirunal Marthanda Varma, author Aswathy Thirunal Gowri Lakshmi Bai and M R Thampan are seen. The book is published by the State Institute of Languages. The book describes avidly the history and rituals of Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram.



CURRENT

Budget

By presenting the second budget for the current financial year in the legislative assembly on 8th July 2011, Finance Minister KM Mani became the first finance minister who proposed nine budgets. The budget in a nut shell as well as excerpts from the budget speech follows...

Thrust areas

- This is a development budget. Its emphasis is on investments in infrastructures such as road, port, airport, water resource management, Kochi Metro Mobility Hub, etc. For upgradation of roads, Rs. 200 crore has been provided. Kochi metro has been given Rs.25 crore. Vizhinjam port has been provided Rs.150 crore. For Kannur airport, Rs.30 crore has been provided.
- It takes care of agriculture and allied sectors. The growth rate in this sector has been insignificant and showed a downward trend during the last few years. Hence emphasis has been given on qualitative investment in agricultural sector, securing agricultural operations through insurance and on issues pertaining to expansion of agriculture to available cultivable land and waste land.
- The budget concentrates on food security. Rice at the rate of Rs. one per k.g. for BPL families and at the rate of Rs. two per k.g. for APL families shall be implemented from Onam this year. This will enhance Government's commitment to Rs.266 Crore.
- To enhance agricultural production, certain new schemes have been proposed. Contract farming under the technical advice and supervision of Krishi Bhavan, interest subsidy for agricultural operations, pump subsidy for Kayal farmers, Public-Private-Panchayat-Partnership to bring waste land under cultivation etc are the newly emphasised areas.
- There is a clear emphasis on entrepreneurial training. After training, small loans for self employment of these trained individuals as well as their micro groups will be given by KFC for which interest subsidy shall be met



Balanced

- by Government.
- There is emphasis on clean Kerala. For that, waste management is the first step for which a scheme has been proposed.
- Further, health care, particularly for cancer, kidney diseases and facilities for palliative care, etc. have been provided. In addition, facilities for dialysis will be made available at all district and government hospitals. There is also a provision for health insurance.
- Sabarimala is an important religious centre. Its connectivity has to be improved for which provision has been made. Further, development of Erumely Township also has been planned.
- On education side, there will be Malayalam University exclusively to encourage study of Malayalam literature, language and culture. A branch of Aligarh Muslim University is coming up in Perinthalmanna in Malappuram District. Meenachil river basin project shall be revived. For initial expenses, Rs.13 crore has been provided.
- Four new medical colleges-at Pathanamthitta, Malappuram, Idukki and Kasaragode
- Establishment of Ezhuthachan Malayalam University at Tirur.
- Rajiv Arogyasree Insurance scheme covering 52 lakh families.

Budget-enclosures

rice@Rs. 1 per kg

From September, 2011 onwards rice will be distributed to all eligible families under the BPL category at the rate of Rs. one per kg. It is expected that about 20,56,487 families will be benefitted under this scheme. Rs. 200 crore is being provided additionally over and above the existing budget provision for this purpose.

State Road Improvement Project

The standards of at least 1000 Km of roads in Kerala will be improved during the next five years. An amount of around Rs. 5100 crore including 1000 crore for land acquisition is required. 'State Road Improvement Project' will be established for implementing this. Funds will be sought from Central Government and other financial institutions for this project.

Kottayam-TB Junction-Kodimatha-Nattakam road, part of MC Road from TB Junction to Nattakom and from Manipuzha to Divan Junction will be developed as Four-line track. The construction of Manarkadu – Ettumanur road as part of Kottayam bypass will be completed for which an amount of

Taxation measures

- Additional resource mobilization-Rs.615.75 crore
- Daily lottery-Additional collection of Rs.263 crore is anticipated.
- Registration fee for intra family transactions will be reduced to Rs.1000/-
- Enhancement of surcharge on IMFL from 5 per cent to 10 per cent-Rs.192 crore additionally anticipated.
- Enhancement of social security cess on liquor -2 per cent-Rs.135 crore additionally anticipated
 - Luxury cess at the rate of 2 per cent for vehicles costing more than Rs.20 lakh
 - 2 per cent cess on luxury buildings

having area over 4000 sq.ft.

- 20 per cent tax on tobacco products.

Economic indicators

- The present budget is expected to reduce both revenue deficit and fiscal deficit. Though permissible up to 3.5 per cent of GSDP, fiscal deficit will remain at 3.2 per cent. Similarly revenue deficit shall be restricted to 1.82 per cent. This budget is an improvement over previous budget which had 3.48 per cent fiscal deficit and 1.97 per cent revenue deficit.
- Revenue receipt increases to Rs.39428 crore from Rs.38547 crore.
- Revenue deficit reduces to Rs.5534 crore from Rs.6019 crore.
- Fiscal deficit decreases to Rs.10507 crore from Rs.10641 crore.



Rs. 2 crore is provided. An amount of Rs. one crore is set apart for the improvement of Chingavanam-Kollad-Kanjikuzhy by-pass road. Central Non-Conventional Energy Department is expected. The construction of Mini Civil Station at Vellanad and Kattappana will be started.

Other roads having special mention

- Kochi-Seaport-Airport Road • Kottayam T.B Junction-Kodimatha-Nattakom-Governemnt College Road
- Ponnani-Vengalam coastal road • Kanjippura-Moodal road
- J.T.S -Thayil road renovation (Kannur District) • Podikund-Kannothumchal road renovation (Kannur District) • Amminikkad-Kodikuthimala road renovation • Angadippuram-Valanchery road renovation • Kumbala-Badiyaduka road • Nellikkunnu bridge and Nellikkunnu beach road construction • Thottayad over bridge Panniyankara Railway over bridge • Puthiyapalam (Kozhikode) • Thiruvalla-Puthupally-Manarkad-Uzhavoor-Koothattukulam K.R.Narayanan Memorial road • Kottarathilkadavu-Puthuppally angadi-Manganam road • Kooroppada Bye-pas • Thuravoor-Pamba road renovation and construction of Thaikattussery, Nerekadavu bridges
- Eerayilkadavu, vattamoodu, Tharappelkadavu, Cherppunkal bridges in Kottayam District • Idathirinji-Kattur road • Paretattukara-Kallettumkara road • Thadikkalkadavu bridge • Island-Kannamkattu bridge • Nettur-Kundannur parallel bridge • Neendakara-Velliyazheekkal Coastal road
- Chekkikadavu bridge and Maniyankolly bridge • Thaliparamba-Koorg road • Painav-Thandikandom-Peppara-Maniyaramkudi-Asokakadavu road
- Prakash Karikkinmedu-Upputhode road • Swaraj-Kozhimala road
- Mundakkayam-Koruthodu-Kanamala-Pamba valley road • Palluruthi-Nalppathadi road • Ponnara bridge • Mundakkayam Bye-pass • Chengannur-Kallissery bridge | Pattan Kulichapara Meenankal-Pannikuzhi road | Ponnamchund-Chayam-Peringammala road and bridge • Koovapadi bridge • Valakam-Pathanapuram-Sabarimala Bye-pass road • Chirattakonam-Melila-Kunnikode road • Vakayar-Vallikode road • Chandanappalli-Konni road • Payyavur-Paisakkari, Chandakkampara-Vanchiyam road • Ponkunnam-Pala road • Poovam-Thirumbazhakadavu bridge • Changanassery-Vazhoor Road renovation • Karukachal-Manimala road • Uravaikkal-Koorali Road • Kollappalli-Melukavu Moonnilavu road.

For the above roads and other important roads and bridges to be selected from the 14 districts 200 crore is earmarked. In addition, 125 crore is also earmarked for taking up those works included with a token provision in Volume IV of Works

- Capital expenditure increases to Rs.5064 crore from Rs.4712 crore and Development expenditure increases to Rs.29872 crore from Rs.28646 crore.

Welfare measures

- Social security pension shall be available at the enhanced rate of Rs. 400 per month from Onam. Apart from social security pension, agriculture pension and pension for small and marginal farmers with less than one acre of holding after they attain 60 years of age, have been proposed at the rate of Rs. 3600/- per annum.
- Free uniform to students between 8-14 years of age.
- Noon meal scheme to be extended to standards 8 and 9.

- Pilgrim safety manual to avoid disasters like the one at Pullumedu.
- 'Safe woman, safe travel' scheme for women's safety in two major bus stations.
- Package for endosulfan victims.
- Rehabilitation package for unwed Adivasi mothers.
- Khadi pension enhanced to Rs.2000/- per month.
- Pension for Second World War veterans enhanced to Rs.1000 per month.

Other measures

- Online registration of land revenue documents.
- Security system at Padmanabha swami temple-Rs. one crore.
- Anti-liquor campaign through Excise

department.

- Business centre and legal aid cells for NRKs.
- New treasuries at Kudappanakkunnu, Kottakkal, Erumely and Chittar.
- Seniority list of candidates empanelled against vacancies will be published in the web site.
- Cabinet sub committee for Sabarimala Master plan.
- Bio-fencing to protect attacks from wild animals.
- Video conferencing up to Taluk office level.
- Publication of details of works in the PWD website.
- Rs.two crore for Karunakaran memorial spinning mill.
- State Entrepreneurs Development Mission with assistance from KFC.

Budget as and when Administrative Sanction for those works are issued. Thus the additional funds provided for new works will come to Rs. 325 crore.

Revenue Towers at Harippad, Kattapana, Kodugallur

New revenue towers at Harippad, Kattapana and Annamanada in Kodungallur will be started under the auspices of Kerala State Housing Board.

Farm Advisory Messaging

Through sound messages and video clipping, the prices of Agricultural produce, pest-disease control measures, climate changes, crop protection measures, apt timing for farming, the availability of seeds and other agricultural equipments etc. will be given to farmers through their mobile phones. A new system for this will be framed. This will be implemented by Farm Information Bureau. An amount of Rs.10 lakh is earmarked for this purpose.

Agriculture land to be exempted from Forest-Environment law

Under the Forest Ordinance promulgated during the tenure of the previous LDF Government, the Patta land of a large number of small scale farmers, especially the land of farmers in Malabar area was declared as forest land by land-environment protection scheme and that too without any notice or remuneration to these farmers. But as per the law

introduced by the former UDF Government, tea, coffee, rubber, pepper, cardamom, coconut, arecanut and cashew plantations or the land with house or land suitable for such purposes were fully exempted from the purview of the said ordinance. This law got the assent of the President on 25.04.2005. Due to the failure in implementing this law, the farmers could not avail its benefits. In the circumstances, the protection under this law will be ensured to all eligible farmers.



Plantation land for other crops

Five per cent of the land in the plantations are permitted to be used for other productive purposes like cultivating medicinal plants, horticulture, floriculture and tourism projects, it will be a remedy for this crisis to a certain extent. The bill passed in this regard by this house will be enacted.

Ezhuthachan Malayalam University

Government have taken a policy decision for setting up of a Malayalam University in the name of Thunchath Ramanujan Ezhuthachan, father of Malayalam language, aimed at preserving our history, culture and heritage and for strengthening our cultural reformation activities.

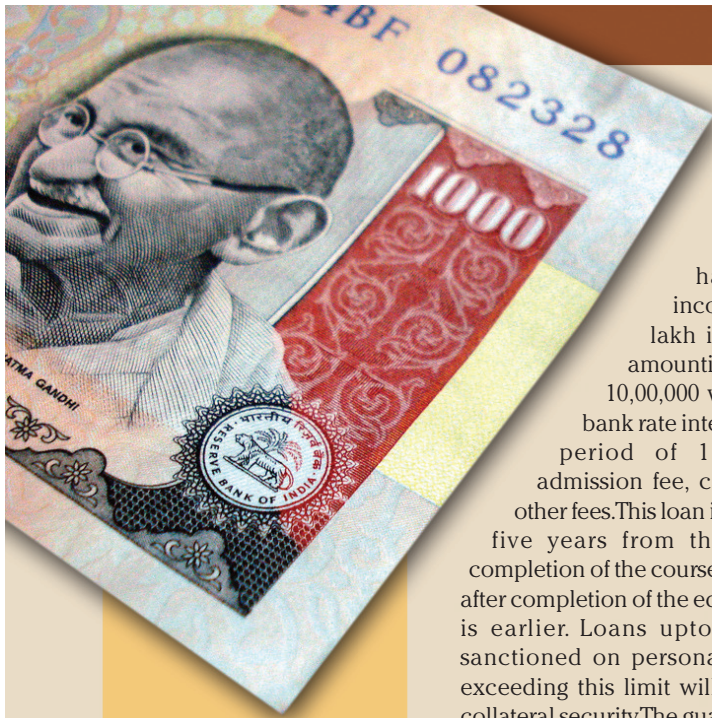
Vidyadhanam Loan scheme

An education loan scheme

24x7

helpline to NRKs

A business centre under NORKA will be started to provide 24 hours helpline and a legal aid cell will be started to provide legal advice to Non-Resident Keralites. This business centre is intended to provide required information to NRIs who are willing to make capital investments in Kerala and also to redress their complaints if any.



By the return of the SMART CITY, a new chapter will be opened in the IT Sector. Joint publicity campaign will be started to invite more companies in the SMART CITY and IT Parks. Similarly action will be taken to move Kerala in the forefront of e-governance and e-commerce.

with the help of KSFE for the students of weaker sections having annual income of less than one lakh is proposed. Loans amounting Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 10,00,000 will be disbursed at bank rate interest for a maximum period of 11 years towards admission fee, caution deposit and other fees. This loan is to be repaid within five years from the 12th month of completion of the course or on employment after completion of the education, whichever is earlier. Loans upto 5,00,000 will be sanctioned on personal surety and loan exceeding this limit will be sanctioned on collateral security. The guardian of the student will be the co-obligant. KSFE will set apart Rs.30 crore every year for this. Every year around 1500 students will be benefited.

Rajeev Arogyasree Health Insurance Scheme

A comprehensive health insurance scheme named "Rajeev Arogyasree" will be started this year for providing free treatment upto Rs. two lakh in all Government hospitals and private hospitals.

The total premium amount for the implementation of this scheme is to be paid to the insurance companies. A total of 52 lakh families including 32 lakh BPL families and 20 lakh APL families having annual income less than Rs. 2.5 lakh, will be benefited under the scheme. Government employees, Quasi-Government employees and those who are having annual income above Rs.2.5 lakh can voluntarily join this scheme on direct payment of the premium amount. For the initial activities of the scheme, Rs.25 crore is earmarked.

New medical colleges

Four new medical colleges will be started at Kasaragod, Idukki, Malappuram and Pathanamthitta districts. To meet the preliminary expense for this purpose Rs.5 crore is earmarked.

Kerala State Self Entrepreneur Development Mission

Figures show that ten percent of the total unemployed of the country is in Kerala. The majority of the jobless are educated. A new scheme 'Kerala State Self Entrepreneur Development Mission' with an investment of Rs.500 crore capable of generating one lakh job opportunities. This scheme will be

implemented with the joint participation of Public and Private sectors and Panchayats (PPPP Model). Kerala Financial Corporation will act as its nodal agency.

Under this scheme 50,000 entrepreneurs and another 50,000 employees @ 5 persons per unit will get employment thereby generating one lakh additional job opportunities. The estimated cost of this mega project is Rs.2000 crore. This scheme will be implemented under the loan scheme of Kerala Financial Corporation. Rs. 25 crore is earmarked towards interest subsidy expenses of this scheme.

Litter free Kerala

Schemes will be formulated to process bio-waste at its source itself and convert it into manure to be used for vegetable and fruit cultivation. In areas where this is impossible, processing plants will be set up at Panchayat level converting the waste into bio-gas and bio-fertilisers. Processing plants will also be set up at Block Panchayat level to recycle non-bio waste and convert them into value added products. The intention is to install plants at district level for converting waste into electricity.

Higher Education

Government will take necessary steps to get institutes of technological excellence like IIT, IIIT established in the state.

Government will establish a centre to promote study, research and communicative skills in English and other foreign languages. Government will make efforts to start five new poly techniques in the State with financial assistance of MHRD, Government of India.

Kerala Council for Historical Research in collaboration with national and international research institutes will undertake multifaceted research activities at 'Pattanam' under Musiris Heritage Scheme.

Global Investment Meet

The Global Investment Meet (GIM) was one of the historical achievements of the previous UDF Government. The GIM declared before the world that Kerala is an investor friendly state. The Smart City was one of the mega projects declared in the GIM. Government, propose to convene an investment meet "Emerging Kerala" to attract the investors from India and abroad.

This Government propose to make a radical change in the field of investment, adopting necessary policies and administrative measures. In order to show case Kerala an Investor friendly state,

effective publicity in India and abroad.

The return of Smart City

By the return of the SMART CITY, a new chapter will be opened in the IT Sector. Joint publicity campaign will be started to invite more companies in the SMART CITY and IT Parks. Similarly action will be taken to move Kerala in the forefront of e-governance and e-commerce.

The possibilities for immediate investment in IT Sector will be at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode. But this, investments can be extended to other small cities in a phased manner. New IT Parks will be started in selected towns.

New Dam at Mullaperiyar

As far as Kerala is concerned Mullaperiyar is a problem of safety and for Tamilnadu, it is of water. The policy of this state government is to ensure water for Tamilnadu and safety for Kerala. Project report on construction of new dam at Mullaperiyar will be submitted to the empowered committee designated by the Supreme Court. Accordingly a special authority will be entrusted with the construction of the new dam within four years and for its observation. For this year's expenditure Rs. 5 crore is provided.

Meenachil River Basin Scheme

A project has been announced to keep the water level of river Meenachil at least at one cubic feet throughout the year, by diverting the tail raise water from Idukki to Moonilavu Panchayat through the tunnels by building check dam at Arakkulam in Thodupuzha Taluk. The water so diverted will be channelled at river Kadappuzha, the tributary of river Meenachil. This mega project will help to strengthen the water sheds in areas of Panchayats and Municipalities on the both banks of river Meenachil. The project will help to prevent the flow of brackish water from lake Vembanadu to river Meenachil. It is aimed to implement drinking water project in the first phase and Irrigation project in the second phase. For the implementation of first phase an amount of Rs. 25 crore is set apart.

Boost for Sabarimala Master Plan

For ensuring the timely implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan, a Master Plan Cell under the Chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary and a Cabinet Sub Committee with Devaswom Minister as Chairman will be formed.

Rs. 15 crore is earmarked for implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan.

The State Government is committed to establish the Angamali-Sabari Railway line. Necessary step will be taken from the part of State Government for early starting of the works.

Saphalyam Housing Scheme

Besides strengthening the Local Self Government to undertake housing projects for economically backward sections, a new scheme, 'SAPHALYAM' will be formulated and implemented this year immediately to address the housing needs of the poorer among the above category. In the first phase of this scheme, 10000 houses will be constructed. Rs. 10 crores is provided as the subsidy for the scheme.

Hello, Finance Minister...

A website will be created for the Finance Minister, namely www.kerala-fm.gov.in and a call centre will be set up for

receiving complaints. Facility will be provided to every tax payer, trader, industrialist and agricultural organisations to submit their complaints through this system. Arrangements will be made to redress them in a time bound manner. The grievances not so redressed will be reviewed by the Finance Minister. Also, to resolve their issues, video conferencing will be arranged with the concerned department officials.

The salient features of the budget

- Revenue receipt which was estimated to be Rs.38547 crore has increases to Rs.39428 crore .
- Revenue deficit decreases to Rs.5534 crore from Rs.6019 crore.
- Revenue deficit which was 1.97 per cent of GSDP comes down to 1.81per cent.
- Fiscal deficit comes down to 10507 from 10641.
- Fiscal deficit which was 3.48 per cent of GSDP has decreased to 3.43 per cent .
- Capital Expenditure which was increased to Rs.5064 crore from Rs.4712 crore.
- Development Expenditure increased from Rs.28646 crore to Rs.29872 crore.



	(Rs.in Crore)
Revenue Receipt	39427.51
Revenue Expenditure	44961.42
Revenue Deficit	5533.91
Capital Expenditure	3814.69
Loans & Advances (Net)	-1158.38
Fiscal Deficit	-10506.99
Public Debt (Net)	7793.76
Public Account (Net)	2554.15
Overall Surplus/Deficit	-159.07
Carry over Surplus/Deficit	175.78
Additional expenditure announced	982.73
Additional resource mobilisation	615.75
Cumulative Deficit/Surplus	-350.27

100 days Hundreds of HOPEs

The UDF Government
on the move

A review of the first 30 days of the 100 day's Programme announced by the Government

UDF government is on full swing to ensure a transparent and corruption-free administration in Kerala and a fast-paced development mode without diluting the welfare of the less privileged sections. The evaluation of the first 30 days of the 100-day programme supports the above statement.

Compensation for Endosulfan victims

The government announced a compensation of Rs.1 lakh each for close family members of those who died of diseases attributed to endosulfan spraying on cashew estates of the Plantation Corporation of Kerala. 486 victims were died up to 2008, but the former government had given assistance only to 178 of them. The rest will also be given a financial assistance of Rs. 1 lakh each. The government decided to include the ration cards of all deserving family members in the Below Poverty

Line category and to provide free ration to all affected family members. They have assured that endosulfan victims would be provided free treatment at the Kozhikode and Pariyaram medical college hospitals and three hospitals in Mangalore.

Moolampilly Package

Rehabilitation issue of those evicted from Moolampilly for the Vallarpadom International Container Transshipment Terminal got solved, thereby putting an end to their endless wait of three and a half years. The government would provide basic requirements in each of the ten centres earmarked for resettlement of the evictees. A sum of Rs.75,000 would be given to each family for piling as the land given was marshy. The government would continue to provide rent at Rs.5000 a month to the evictees up to six months after the establishment of the infrastructure

facilities promised by the government along with the arrears in rent for the past 27 months. Twelve families who had been denied allotment of land under the rehabilitation package would be given titles. Government assured that one member from each family which got displaced would be given job based on their educational qualification.

Kuttanad Package

The government earmarks Rs.1000 crore for the Kuttanad Package in the revised Budget for the current year. A comprehensive plan to clean up the polluted Vembanad Lake has also been developed. Projects worth Rs. 3500 crores will be implemented in three years. Out of which projects worth 523 crores have already got approved. 75 per cent of the expenditure is to be reimbursed by the Union Government. A new rice mill and godown to stock rice would be commissioned in Kuttanad under the

Leap 3



Package and the rice produced there would be marketed as a brand. As per the report of Chennai IIT, renovation work will be done in Thanneermukkam bund and Thottapalli spillway.

Kochi Metro

Kochi Metro Rail project will be implemented on Chennai model. Special purpose vehicle will be formed. The model envisages equity participation of 15 per cent each by the Centre and the State government. More than 50 per cent of the project cost is to be funded either by Japan's Overseas Development Assistance or as loan from Indian financial institutions. Government has started the preparatory works, which had been entrusted to the DMRC. Work starts with rebuilding of the railway over-bridge near the town station and construction of a new over-bridge near the KSRTC bus stand and widening and improvements to Salim Rajan Road and Mullassery Canal Road.

Chengara Package

The government will rectify the anomalies in the Chengara package prepared by the previous Left Democratic Front government. The land allotted to the landless poor at Periyayil in Kasargod was not fit for habitation or farming. The government has assured to provide basic facilities for them. Revenue Minister will visit rehabilitation centres in Kasargod, Idukki and Attapadi and take necessary steps.

Pullumedu Disaster

The measures to provide financial assistance of Rs. 5 lakhs to the dependants of those who died in Sabarimala Pullumedu disaster are in progress and will successfully get done in the near future.

Kanamala Disaster

Efforts to provide financial assistance of Rs. 4 lakhs, by Government and

Devaswom Board jointly, to eleven devotees from Andhra Pradesh who died in Kanamala disaster is progressing.

Petrol sales tax exemption

Kerala government effected sales tax exemption on hike in price of petrol to minimise the burden on the common people.

Unique Identification Project

Akshaya Mission has been designated for the implementation of the Unique Identification project in the State along with Keltron and IT@school. Under the UID project, each Indian citizen will be given a unique identification number that will in due course become the single-most important document for availing oneself of all services — both private and government. Temporary posts and an amount of Rs. 140 lakhs for administrative expenses have been approved. Government is trying to finish

in
0days

The government announced a compensation of Rs. one lakh each for close family members of those who died of diseases attributed to endosulfan spraying on cashew estates of the Plantation Corporation of Kerala



Kerala is First Again



the project in a year which was supposed to take 3 years. Then, Kerala would be the first state in India to provide identity cards to everyone.

Education

The decision to make Malayalam as the first language in schools will be implemented this year itself. Though the decision was taken by the former LDF government, they couldn't realise it. Plus two seats in all schools in the state have been increased by 20 per cent. Government will grant no-objection certificate to CBSE and ICSE schools in the state.

Land for tribals

Process of distributing land for 6037 tribal families is in progress which is expected to finish in 100 days. Steps are being taken to find out land for those tribal families which are either landless or have lost their lands fully or partially.

House for Bangladesh Colony inhabitants

An amount of Rs.15 crore has been approved for building houses for 340 families in Bangladesh colony of

Kozhikode.

Child Labour

Decision has been made to conduct state wide raid to restrict child labour and other exploitation of children. Government has decided to start website for finding out missing children and to establish State Child Rights Commission. Establishment of Commission would help to protect children's rights. Child

protection unit and Special juvenile police unit will be initiated in all districts.

Aid for Malabar Cancer Centre

Government has decided to increase the basic facilities of Malabar Cancer centre. Appointments will be made in the already approved 86 posts, of which 20 are doctors'. The remuneration of doctors will be made equivalent to that of doctors in Regional Cancer Centre. Once the



Kerala has many firsts to its credit. From being the first State in the country to achieve cent per cent literacy to the first State to implement many land reforms. Notching up yet another first, live web cast has been inaugurated at the Office of the Chief Minister (CM) at the State Secretariat in the capital city of Thiruvananthapuram. The only Chief Minister's Office in the country to have live web casts, this initiative has been heralded as an attempt at leveraging technology for achieving efficiency and transparency in administration and governance.

Live Web Casts

The successful operationalisation of live web casts at the Chief Minister's office, which was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Kerala Oommen Chandy on 1 July, fulfills yet another action item earmarked in the '100 Days Programme' of the new Government. A worthy example has been set by capitalising the power of the Internet for enabling openness and efficiency in

administration. Persons with access to the Internet can now log on to the website available at www.keralacm.gov.in and can watch live the activities taking place within the office of the Chief Minister, both when he is present and absent in office.

Consonant to the decision that the CM's office will function round-the-clock, the web casting would also be available throughout. Four cameras have been placed inside the CM's office and chambers to capture live meetings, press conferences and cabinet briefings. This unparalleled initiative has witnessed tremendous following, as indicated by the hit statistics of the website. As of the evening of 2nd July, one lakh visitors had made 71.54 lakh hits and after 12 days, the number of visitors increased to 2.72 lakhs and hits to 1.84 crore.

Multi-dimensional website

The website www.keralacm.gov.in is not all about live web casts though. It has several other features that make it quite valuable to the citizens. It has the

video and audio recordings of the CM's first public address besides forums like 'Petition to CM' and 'Mail to CM', through which citizens can communicate directly with the Chief Minister of Kerala. Status documents on some of the key projects and initiatives like 'Kochi Metro,' 'Vembanad Ecosystem,' 'Vizhinjam Mother Port,' etc.

Visitors to the website can also get to understand the Chief Minister better from the pages under 'Profile.' It tries to unravel the different facets behind the man, from that of a 'Karmayogi' and 'Mass Leader' to a 'Statesman' and 'Family Man'. The section called 'Tales from Kunjunju' exposes readers to the humorous side of the CM's personality. The link 'Cartoons' draws one to a smile, even while giving glimpses of the Chief Minister's artistic inclinations.

It is also noteworthy that this design and development of this multi-dimensional website, together with the web cast facility, was completed in a short span of 28 days.

Kanthimathi

A humane approach would be adopted towards tribal people who had occupied government land for building houses for themselves. They would be allotted land, but those who had occupied government land at Chinnakkanal would have to be moved to suitable locations.

construction of new building gets finished, the number of beds will increase from 110 to 220. More staffs will be appointed accordingly. Attempts would be made to get funds from central government. The most modern Linear Acceleration machine for the radiation treatment will be made available.

Kiliroor Case

Government will bear the educational expense of Sneha, daughter of Kiliroor case victim.

Eviction of encroachers in Munnar

Government has arrived at a consensus that all encroachments in the Munnar area should be evicted. However, a distinction will be made between those who encroached upon government

land for commercial purposes and farmers who had settled down for agriculture. A humane approach would be adopted towards tribal people who had occupied government land for building houses for themselves. They would be allotted land, but those who had occupied government land at Chinnakkanal would have to be moved to suitable locations. They have assured that there would not be any demolitions and that the government is proposed to act legally and peacefully.

Assistant Grade Appointment

Crime Branch is entrusted with the responsibility of finding out those who have destroyed or concealed the answer sheets of Assistant Grade examination in University of Kerala. Judge N. Sukumaran Commission that enquired

the matter had made such a suggestion in the report they had submitted.

Pariyaram Medical College controversy

Government ordered probe against Pariyaram Medical College. Financial dealings of the college in the past 5 years will be investigated. Committee which includes Sanjay Garg, V. Geetha (Medical education director) and K. V. Suresh Babu are supposed to submit the report in 3 months.

In addition to all these, measures to supply 25kg of rice at the rate of 1rs/kg for BPL families in the festival season have reached its final stage. The government has decided to enhance the compensation given to people whose houses were completely destroyed by monsoon to Rs. 1 lakh. Currently Rs.35,000 was being paid as compensation for loss of houses. Compensation for damaged houses would be determined based on the extent of damage. Death by lightning has been included under this package and the next kin of those killed by lightning would get Rs.1 lakh. ■

Revenue Department is one of the major departments sharing the largest public interface on a day to day basis with people visiting the offices under it for various purposes. Therefore in most cases, to the people, government means revenue offices and the officers concerned.

A good office imparts good will and vice versa. So, it will be the endeavour of the government to improve the conditions in its offices so that the public is provided with prompt and better service. In this regard, redressal of long standing issues also plays a pivotal role in building confidence with public. The Government has given utmost priority to meet with issues ranging from unlawful encroachments of government land as Munnar, distribution of land to landless farmers at Chengara, rehabilitation of evictees of Moolampally

and of course, the effective implementation of ban on endosulfan and fair conservation to the sufferers of the deadly pesticide.

Government has declared its resolve to address the above along with other issues which are dealt with separately by respective departments in 100 day programme and else. The Government wants permanent solution to the sufferings of people from all sorts of life.

Munnar, being the most picturesque and unique spot of attracting tourists from all over the world, draws a special attention. It is a bare fact that tens of thousands of acres of land has been encroached in and around Munnar. But eviction involving violent means and destruction of edifices does not be in conformity with the government policy. It intends to evict the encroachers and grab the land therewith lawfully and by

established ways. Priority should be given to conserving the ecology and environment of Munnar. The public can impact a visible change in the system in the coming months.

The government envisages a Munnar Township Project comprising all the above parameters. Originally 1000 acres proposed for township to be developed into an internationally acclaimed tourism centre. But this has tentatively decided to enhance to 2000 acres. Tourism Department has come out with a blueprint of the master plan. After examining, the Government will implement the project incorporating necessary improvements if needed. The services of an international agency may also be sought.

Minister has personally visited various places in Munnar to assess the gravity of unlawful encroachments

Initiatives

Utmost priority has been given to redressal of long standing issues ranging from unlawful encroachments in government land to consolation for the victims of Endosulfan

Positive and Transparent



reported earlier. He was submitted a detailed report to the cabinet. Based on the report the Chief Minister Oommen Chandy has convened an all party meeting at Thycaud Guest House. It was unanimously agreed to distinguish marginal land holdings for livelihood from marginal unlawful encroachments for commercial gains. The Government stressed on a paradigm policy shift, a very positive and humane approach would be taken in the case of small and marginal land holders. Marginal land holders will be rehabilitated and protected until new hamlets are completed and handed over to them.

Eviction in this case will be lawful and peaceful. As for the massive encroachers government has offered a grace time of two weeks to vacate on their own. If they do not comply, sterner measures are on the cards. In order to expedite the protection and reclamation of government lands, the Munnar Tribunal is being strengthened.

At the same time, the Government is taking a very benevolent and humanitarian approach towards the tribal families. Pattas will be distributed to all eligible tribal families. As part of 100 days' programmes 6037 tribal families will be given away the record of rights as per the Forest Protection Act. The Government has also decided to distribute pattas to 3000 eligible families within a year. Steps are also being taken to distribute Aralam farm land in Kannur district to eligible tribal families and

construct houses.

Government has taken a more realistic and humane approach to settle the longstanding issue of reasonable rehabilitation in Moolampally in Ernakulam district where there has been much protest against the inadequacy of compensation granted to those families whose lands were taken for development purposes.

The Chief Minister and Minister for Revenue took a very positive initiative to settle the issue. The new policy is to involve and ensure the cooperation of the affected families in development projects. Adequate compensation and rehabilitation are being made part of every development package. The Moolampally issue is settled with a generous and determined offer from the part of the Government.

Based on the widespread complaints about the unsustainability of the land offered as part of the Chengara package earlier, the new government examined the matter with utmost prominence. As such, steps are being expedited to hand over adequate fertile land to the aggrieved. This is also included in the 100 days programme showing the gross resolve and priority. It has also been decided to provide houses to the marginalised people in Bangladesh Colony in Kozhikode district.

The most important among the newly announced packages is the one devoted to the sufferers of the deadly

pesticide, endosulfan in Kasaragod district. The Government has announced Rs. one lakh as a solace amount to the victims and the affected, as part of the package. It covers more than 500 people. Besides, the Government has decided to approach the Central Government for further relief to make the package more generous. Also, there has created a new post of deputy collector to coordinate and effectively implement the relief package. A team of ministers headed by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy visited Kasaragod and convened a meeting to oversee and coordinate the relief measures. A concrete step was taken to firmly stop the usage of endosulfan and seize whatever stock piled up in various places across the State. Provision has also been made to extend immediate medical relief to those affected by endosulfan. It has also been decided to transfer the required land for the proposed Central University in Kasaragod district.

The Government believes that when land acquisition for any public purpose is carried out, the land-holders should also be stakeholders in the proposed projects. This will bring transparency and humaneness into the land acquisition system. Government will also examine novel ways in which land-holders can become stakeholders in the proposed projects to have a win-win situation, i.e., the landowner gets a reasonable compensation at the same time developmental activities can also take place. ■

B. Harikumar

Asserting the firm decision of the Government to evict the encroachers from Munnar and surrounding areas, Revenue Minister Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan paid a visit at Munnar. Minister and the people's representatives accompanied, eye-witnessed the re-encroachment to the land previous government had evacuated, till-not-see-encroachments, land grabbing with the support of the regional political leaderships etc.

The Minister's first visit was at Chinnakkal Gap Road where encroachment upto 250 acres of land occurred. Though this land was declared as government land in 2007 by the

evicting team, private parties encroached it again. He also watched the 70 acre massive encroachment taken place in five kilometres from this spot. Encroachments in Anayirankal area, constructional activities in encroached land owned by KSEB, encroachments near Munnar Government College etc. He also visited the Munnar Tribunal Office, specially meant for handling cases relating to encroachments and had discussions with the Chairman, K. Balasubrahmanyam. On the basis of the report prepared by the Revenue Minister, all party meeting headed by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy has decided to request the encroachers to leave the

land within two weeks or face stringent legal action. As the ultimatum ended, the team of officials led by minister for Revenue himself evicted a total of 455.33 acres of land in six different places in and around Chinnakkal and Parvathy mala near Munnar. They erected notice boards on the gateways declaring the Government occupation. The notice warned of stringent action including imprisonment upto three years, if encroached again. It is noteworthy that eviction in the form of force or violence did not take place and the entire act took place peacefully. The Minister said the Government will also take steps to prepare rules by elaborating Munnar

Recapturing the Glory

Ordinance and to constitute Munnar Conservation Authority.

Munnar is located on the Western Ghats in Idukki district. The name Munnar is derived from the Malayalam words moonnu (three) and aar (river). Muthirappuzha, Nalthanni and Kundala are the three rivers. Munnar gives us unforgettable sights and experiences of the Western Ghats.

Munnar has an altitude ranging from 1600 metres to 2000 metres from sea level. The temperature ranges between 10° C and 0° C in winter and 8° C and 16° C in summer. The landscape is dotted by tea plantations and labour lines.

The early inhabitants of these mountain ranges were the Muthuvan tribal community. The Munnar Hills later were occupied by the members of Poonjar Royal Family, the roots of them are connected to the Pandya Dynasty in Tamil Nadu who bought Poonjar from Aditya Varma of Thekkumkoor kingdom even though, the region fell under the jurisdiction of the Travancore Kingdom.

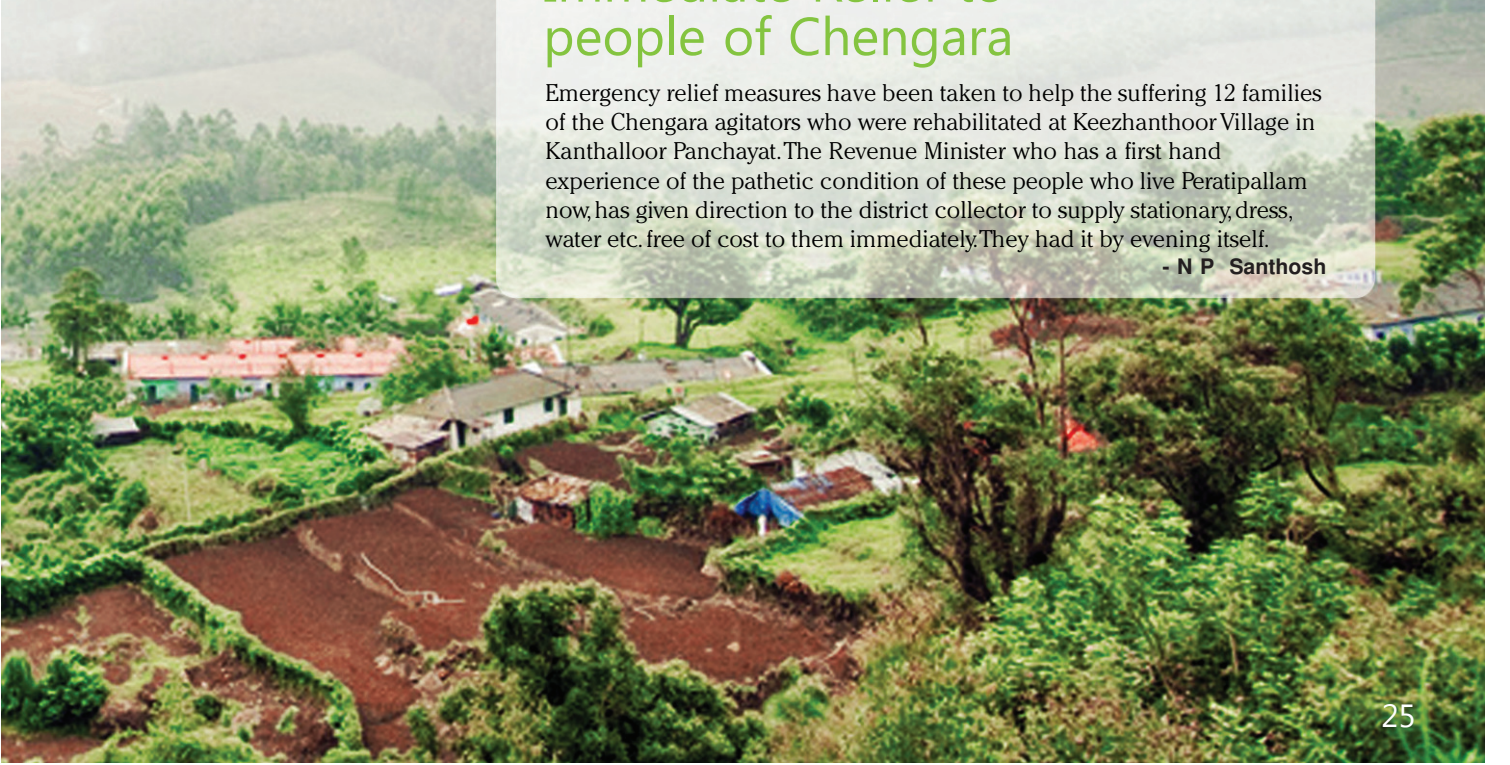
It was John Daniel Munro, the British Resident of the then Travancore Kingdom, who took on lease the Kannan Devan Hills in 1877 and A.H. Sharp, a European planter started tea cultivation there in 1880. Tata Tea Ltd. was formed in 1983 and they transferred their



Immediate Relief to people of Chengara

Emergency relief measures have been taken to help the suffering 12 families of the Chengara agitators who were rehabilitated at Keezhanthoor Village in Kanthalloor Panchayat. The Revenue Minister who has a first hand experience of the pathetic condition of these people who live Peratipallam now, has given direction to the district collector to supply stationary, dress, water etc. free of cost to them immediately. They had it by evening itself.

- N P Santhosh



Correcting the Past Mistakes

The Chief Minister Oommen Chandy said that it is not the policy of the Government to throw away the evictees who yield their property for developmental projects to the streets. He was talking in a function at Moolampilly near Kochi to disburse compensation and titles to evictees of Moolampilly. They were evicted for developing the recently inaugurated Vallarpadom International Transshipment Container Terminal. The Chief Minister said the evictees would get due share in the respective projects also considering their educational status.

The Minister for Revenue Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan said that the Government had determined to start the rehabilitation activities on a clean slate forgetting the past mistakes. It is the priority of the Government to settle the issues raised by them amicably.

The people of Moolampilly, a sub urban village of Kochi were evicted to facilitate the development of Vallarpadom Container Terminal. 14 families are resettled at Mulavukad and the rest are shifted to Kothad and Thykkav of Cheranalloor.

plantations into Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company Pvt. Ltd., formed in 2005.

Thus, Munnar now is a picturesque slope of the lovely tea plantations. Miles and miles of unending expanses of tea plantations astonish the visitors. Regular treatment keeps its heights to a four or five feet tall. Plain walk around Munnar enable us to experience the spectacular views of tea plantation.

Most of the native flora and fauna of Munnar have disappeared due to severe habitat fragmentation, resultant of the plantation. However, some species continue to survive in several protected areas nearby. Munnar provide ample option to travellers to enjoy the heavenly beauty of Western Ghats.

Marayoor is a rain shadow village located 40 km from Munnar, with a handful of unique wonders. It is the only place in Kerala with a natural growth of sandalwood trees. Marayoor houses the 'muniyaras' (stone coffins) of the Neolithic Age. It also boasts of 'Marayoor Jaggery', the best of its kind with the highest percentage of sugar.

Evavikulam National Park is 97

CH Ananda

Solace to Victims



A land of rivers, Kasaragod is rich with fertile land suitable for cashew plantation. Scientific cashew farming started here around four decades back. To prevent the attack of tea mosquitoes which destroy the flowers of cashew tree, pesticide has been begun to apply. Since 1878 onwards, the deadly endosulfan has been used for this. In the beginning, rocker spray was the method of pesticide application. Then

helicopters were used. A lion's share of the poison thus sprayed fell on the lands and paddy fields adjacent to the plantation area. The hell-like life of the dwellers of these regions began then.

While the children of Kasaragod were watching, this deadly poison engrossed into their own blood, enslaving them to terrible diseases and physical as well as mental disorders. People succumbed to unknown



diseases and children born with physical and mental handicap. Then, on 2001, State Government has banned the usage of endosulfan in Kerala. But the misery of the people prevailed.

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy doubled the compensation amount of Rs.50,000 to the endosulfan victims. The families of those who died since 1995 due to endosulfan are also included for compensation. Steps have also taken to provide advanced treatment facility at Kasaragod hospital for the endosulfan affected.

Aid to the tune of Rs.1000 to Rs.2500 was distributed to the School children from the families of people died of endosulfan by the Chief Minister. The financial aids for upto seventh standard, high school and plus two students were enhanced to Rs.2000, Rs.3000 and Rs.4000 respectively.

Special wards have started functioning exclusively for endosulfan patients in Kasaragod General Hospital and

district hospital at Kanhangad. Besides, cancer treatment is done in free of cost in many hospitals that include Thiruvananthapuram Regional Cancer Centre.

Buds Schools have been started for mentally challenging children in 11 panchayats affected by endosulfan. To know and disburse the problems of endosulfan affected, special ICDS Supervisors are appointed in these panchayats.

Endosulfan Victims Relief and Remediation Cell, envisaged to ensure rehabilitation and treatment of the effected is started functioning. The Cell demands implementation of total rehabilitation package that include consolation money of Rs.one lakh to the families of the deceased and establishment of special tribune in line with the Bhopal Tragedy redressal.



sq.km in extent, consisting mostly of high altitude grasslands. The park holds the largest viable population of the endangered Nilgiri Tahr, a mountain goat. This park is also home to several species of rare butterflies, animals and birds. The place becomes a hot destination of tourists world over when the hill slopes get covered in a carpet of flowers of *Strobilanthus Kunthianum*, popularly known as Neelakurinji. Blooming once in twelve years, the plant is endemic to this area of the Western Ghats. This area offers abundant scope for mountain trekking. The Anamudi Peak, which is the highest peak in South India, is located inside the park.

Another notable attractions in Munnar are Chinnar, famous for elephants; Mattupetty, known for its beautiful lake and dairy farm; Pllivasal, the first hydro electric project; Chinnakkanal, a place of power house waterfalls; Top Station, the highest point in the town; Tea Museum; Anayirangal Echo Point and so on. All these invite us to enjoy the panoramic view of Western Ghats. ■

Replenishing the Old Rice Bowl

A few years back the nation witnessed a terrible catastrophe of farmer's suicide due to various reasons which struck the small state of Kerala also. It was in that scenario the Government of Kerala came forward with a handful of remedial measures to meet with the challenge. As part of it, Government of Kerala with the aid of Government of India appointed Chennai based M.S. Swaminathan

Research Foundation to study the key issues afflicting Kuttanad, once rice bowl of Kerala and prepare a project report to mend those issues. The Foundation submitted its report on 24th July 2008 titled 'Measures to mitigate agrarian distress in Alappuzha and Kuttanad Wetland ecosystem' and offered assistance. Thus a special package for Kuttanad came into being. Rs. 1839.75

Kuttanad package is meant for patching up the environmental, agricultural, social and economic damages. Have a glimpse



I N T E R V I E W

Reviving the Ecology and Cultivation

*Minister for Irrigation, P.J. Joseph expressed optimism that the rice bowl of Kerala will redeem its lost glory and abundance once the Kuttanad package gets implemented. The Government has already started implementing various schemes under the project. The minister said that Government envisages a dual pronged strategy of augmenting paddy cultivation, allied agriculture and also the environmental stability of the region. P.J. Joseph was talking to **R.Venugopal** on the Kuttanad package. Excerpts follows:*

How do you differentiate the Kuttanad package from the previous schemes implemented in Kuttanad?

The Kuttanad package as such envisages the over all growth of Kuttanad by redeeming agriculture especially paddy cultivation on one hand and reviving the environmental stability on the other. Controlling flood situation is a major initiative. In this way, it is a composite, corrective and cumulative initiative on the revival of the ecological and agricultural life of Kuttanad. Our aim is to redeem the status of rice bowl to Kuttanad.

How are you going to manage the flood situation in Kuttanad?

Managing the flood is a major initiative of Kuttanad package. The Government has entrusted IIT Chennai and CWRDM, Kozhikode to conduct a joint study on this. It is learned that the report is already finalized though not yet received. We are hopeful of resolving the flood problem once the report gets implemented.

What remedial measures are there on the cards?

We have a statistics with us which says the quantum of outpour of flood water to sea as 4228 m³/s. But the two outlets viz.

Thanneermukkom barrage and Thottappally spillway discharge only 2580 m³/s rising the level of Vembanad lake. Thus water level over tops the outer bunds of padasekharams and breaches into. So, the project proposes to rise the height of outer bunds as well as strengthen them. For this, pile and slab system is adopted replacing the conventional bunding system.

What do you think is the ultimate benefit of Kuttanad package?

The project is supposed to be completed in a span of three years. It is best hoped that the Puncta and Virippu cropping system can be extended round the calendar after the project execution is over. The enhanced efficiency will be reflected in our granary.

The environmental part of the package remains untouched...

Yes. But it is the part and parcel of the package. As I told you, a main component of the package is the environmental study conducted by IIT and CWRDM. The report is expected to be a breakthrough in redeeming the lost glory of Kuttanad and hence to be supported by all.



acre has been earmarked out of which Rs. 1525 crore is to be utilised through Ministry of Irrigation. Areas that include Kuttanad package are entire Alappuzha district and places of Kottayam and Pathanamthitta districts that come under Kuttanad Wetland System.

Out of the total package, the central Ministry for Water Resources has given approval to six projects with an estimated cost of Rs. 321.5 crore. They include renovation of Thanneermukkom barrage and Thottappally spillway, regulate

E X C L U S I V E

Thanneermukkom barrage to let more saline water upstream

Major recommendations of the joint report prepared by IIT, Chennai and CWRDM, Kozhikode on the environmental stability of Kuttanad

A joint study conducted by IIT, Chennai and CWRDM, Kozhikode on the environmental aspects of Thanneermukkom barrage and Thottappally spillway proposed the Government to enhance the duration of the shutters of the barrage opened up during December-March, usually when it keeps closed.

If approved by the Government, the ingress of saline water upstream Vembanad Lake will take place for more days. This is a long-standing demand of various environmental organisations and activists concerned on the lake.

Minister for Irrigation PJ Joseph has ascertained that the report prepared as part of Kuttanad Project will be considered by the Government and implemented in full spirit. He expressed optimism that the project will help mending the ecological damages occurred to the region in the past as well as augmenting paddy cultivation.

Meanwhile, the CWRDM has completed its study and the report is ready for submission, says the director of CWRDM Dr. KV Jayakumar in an exclusive interview to *Kerala Calling* over telephone.

The other main recommendations of the study group: The flood water level of Kuttanad may be reduced by half a metre during rainy season, if the width of the approach canal of Thottappally spillway is increased by 300 metres 10 km upstream from the present 100 metres.

The issue of pollution of Vembanad lake may be reduced if the coffer dam portion of the Thanneermukkom barrage be removed and new gates and shutters fixed.

Installing an array of ten sensors 250 m upstream of Thanneermukkom barrage may enable measuring the salinity level of lakewater upstream when the shutters are opened. It is estimated that the salinity below 1.5 ppt (parts per thousand) will not damage the cultivation of Kuttanad. The shutters may be regulated to control the salinity below this stipulated measure.

Simultaneously, the shutters may be regulated based on the readings taken from the sensors fixed downstream to take note of the salinity there.

- Arvee

waterflow of C,D,Rani,Chithira blocks, study on Thanneermukkom barrage and Thottappally spillway, A.C canal and Kariyar Orumuttu.

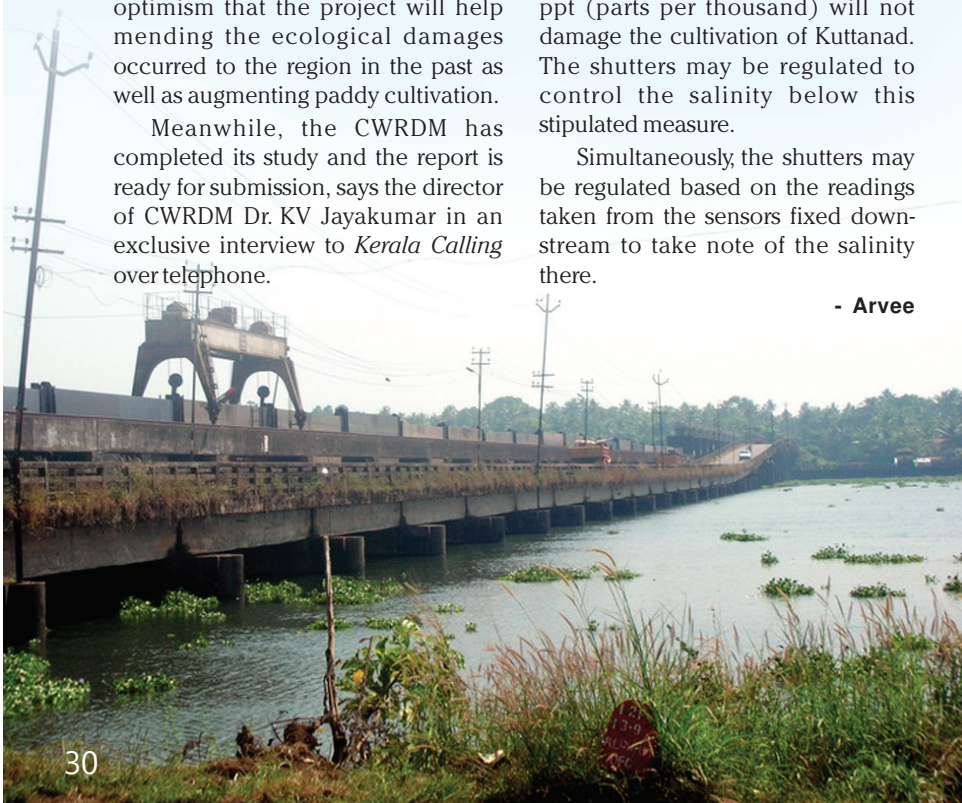
But it was later found that these attempts are not sufficient to conserve the ecology of Kuttanadu. Thus the representatives of Government of Kerala and members of Parliament from Kerala visited central minister for Water Resources and invited him to visit Kuttanad. After that, the Centre has sanctioned some more projects involving an amount of Rs. 1197crore. The project involves infrastructure development for upliftment of paddy cultivation, renovation of ponds and

Kuttanad, once the rice bowl of Kerala is no more bearing the title for over three-four decades because of various factors. In fact, Kuttanad is an ideal example of man's unrelenting quest for taming the nature.

other water sources of Onattukara and Kuttanad.

The centre has given sanction to projects to the tune of Rs. 143crore Besides, central technical advisory committee approved schemes for Rs. 379 crore This is awaiting nod from the empowered committee. Kariyar Orumuttu scheme is implemented by the state government. The total outlay is expected to be enhanced to Rs. 3500 cr after detailed studies.

Kuttanad, once the rice bowl of Kerala is no more bearing the title for over three-four decades because of various factors. In fact, Kuttanad is an ideal example of man's unrelenting quest for taming the nature. It bears a unique distinction of wetlands that lie about 2.5 metres below mean sea level. These are cultivating paddy lands that are reclaimed from



The Flower of Peace

A very popular indoor house plant which produces typical Aroid flower - a densely crowded inflorescence called a spadix which is subtended by one large tract called a spathe. The spadix is generally cream or ivory when young and turns green with age; the spathe is generally white turning green with age. This plant is the flower of peace or Peace Lily which is scientifically spathiphyllum. These shade loving plants are native to the rainforests of Central and South America. These thrive very well in our homesteads also.

The plant has leaves which are banal, glossy and somewhat deeply veined. The petioles are long and the leaves arch gracefully. The plant produces offsets at the base. These offsets can be pulled out carefully with at least two leaves attached to it for fresh planting in pots containing equal quantities of leaf manure and coarse sand. Newly potted plants need not be fertilized at least for three months.

Peace lily enjoys medium to bright light. But if the light is too low it may not flower. The medium should be well drained. If growing in bright light, keep the medium moist. They generally flower in the spring, while some sporadically flower throughout the year. The beautiful flowers are fragrant also. Repot the plant when roots begin to crown the plant. Dust or wash the leaves once a month. Remove any yellowed leaves or spent flowers to keep plant trimmed and neat.

Peace lily can also be used as a terrarium plant in aquariums and gold fish bowls. Another peculiarity of the plant is that it cleans indoor air of many environmental contaminants like benzene, formaldehyde and similar pollutants. Peace lilies have been hybridised and there are now dozens of varieties available ranging from miniature to massive, from deep green with snow-white flowers to golden-leaved beauties. A very well-grown peace lily may bloom twice a year resulting in several months of flower.



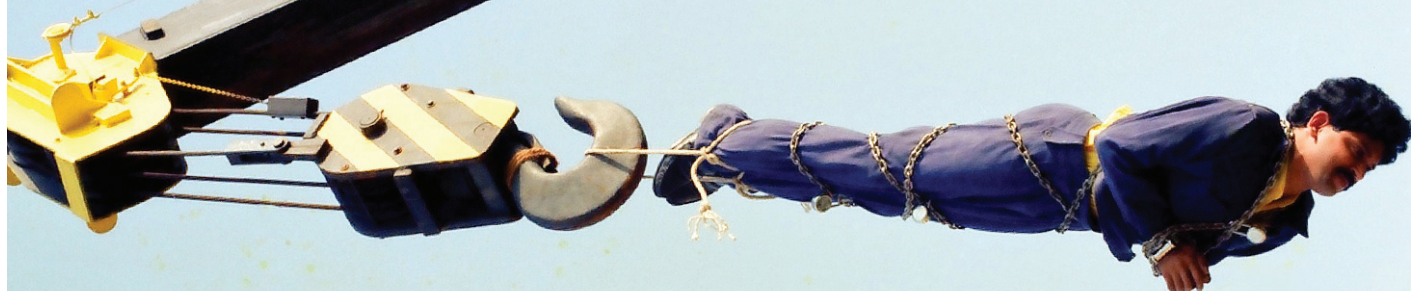
Vembanad lake. The paddy fields are called padasekharams colloquially. These padasekharams are reclaimed with the help of outer bunds which attracts tourists from all over the world.

In fact the landscape is unique second to Holland only. There are about 1436 padasekharams in Kuttanad. It covers an area of 55,000 ha. The total length of the outer bunds of padasekharams is 4196 km. The Government of Kerala has already executed improving 1680 km. of bunds. The height of the remaining 2516 km

bunds will be raised under the package and is undergoing.

Puncha (Summer crop) is the traditional crop of Kuttanad that begins from Oct-Nov. Toil begins with operation of bailing out of water from padasekharams. The other season is the Virippu (autumn crop) in which lesser area is cultivated. The inability to raise a second crop lies with the mammoth inundation during monsoon and saline intrusion during summer. In order to tide over this menace, the Government of Kerala has initiated Kuttanad

Development Scheme during 1950-1975 which included Thottappally spillway, R Block-Holland Project and Thanneermukkom Project. Thottappally spillway helps to divert a major portion of the flood water into the sea at Thottappally, the extreme south of the flood limit. The Thanneermukkom barrage was envisaged to mitigate the problem of saline water intrusion into the Vembanad kayal lands located south of Thanneermukkom during summer when the fresh water inflow of the feeder rivers to the kayal became weak.



Muthukad brings Merlin's glory for India

Twenty-five years of journey through fame and prestige has not drained this "Magic's Oscar-Merlin Award Winner" of any of his majestic qualities. So what is that keeps Gopinath Muthukad grounded? It is just "passion" for magic. Only passion can lead to outstanding contributions in any field of activity, proclaims Muthukad, the Malayali pride in magic. To him, it is his unflagging passion that has fetched the "International Merlin Award", the world's paramount award for him. The singularity of this honour is that it is offered by the world's largest International Magicians Society with a 37000 plus members. In fact it is granted after a perfect peer-review of the magic performer around the world.

By winning this, Muthukad joins the global hall of fame of magicians, becoming the second Indian after PC Sorcar (Jr.) to make this glorious entry.



PM's appreciation

Soon after the crowning glory the magician was first patted by none but the Premier, Dr. Manmohan Singh. It was a very personal meeting at the PM's official residence, when Dr. Singh felicitated the magician with the best of his words. On the occasion, a poignant performance of a patriotic magic was Muthukad's way of expressing his gratitude to the Prime Minister. After all, adding such meaning to every magical initiative is Muthukad's own style.

It's a daylight truth that Muthukad's untiring efforts could raise the standard of native magic. The Merlin award, for example, is a sure regaining of the past glory of Indian magic.

Magic with a mission

Being a performer loyal to his art, Muthukad's feats always preserve that enchanting beauty of magic. He does magic to sooth minds and for recreation. Apart from these there is an unbeatable Muthukad's way of using magic as a medium for spreading virtuous ideals. Four times the country had seen him crisscrossing the geological and language diversities as part of his magical missions. He rolled the wheels of magic proclaiming values of national integration, communal harmony, social amity and Gandhian philosophies. As a magic charioteer, Muthukad was profoundly supported by Indian Army twice – first during his Vismay Swaraj Yatra recreating the glorious episodes of first freedom struggle in 2007 and Mission India sending a strong current of messages against terrorism during 2010.

Against black magic

Magic is an art that can be used for the good and the evil. It takes a really perilous turn when magic is misused. There are umpteen of incidents on certain human gods misusing the art of magic for their selfish gains. In front of these black magicians, Muthukad is a strong challenger. To fight superstitions is one of his life mottos.

Well, the thirty-five year magic career has never been a piece of cake for him. Achievements were not overnight products either. Victories and defeats



never make a difference to this much composed and strongly committed magician. Conjuror Muthukad has enough life experiences to balance between these. If defeat calls for more determination, success demands more devotion, he would say.

Trials and tribulations

If to take a flashback, even his debut performance at the age of 10 was a miserable failure. But for him each defeat was an inspiration. In front of his determination, debacles turn into delights. It was heartbreaking for him to see the National Flag being burnt in front of eyes during one of his India voyages at one of the remotest spots in Nagaland. But such ugly expressions never doused his will.

The Merlin award – the one which he felt like a spell of magic on his life – has only made him more devoted to the art.

Magic Academy

Among the professional magicians of the country, Muthukad is the lone player who boldly hands down magical

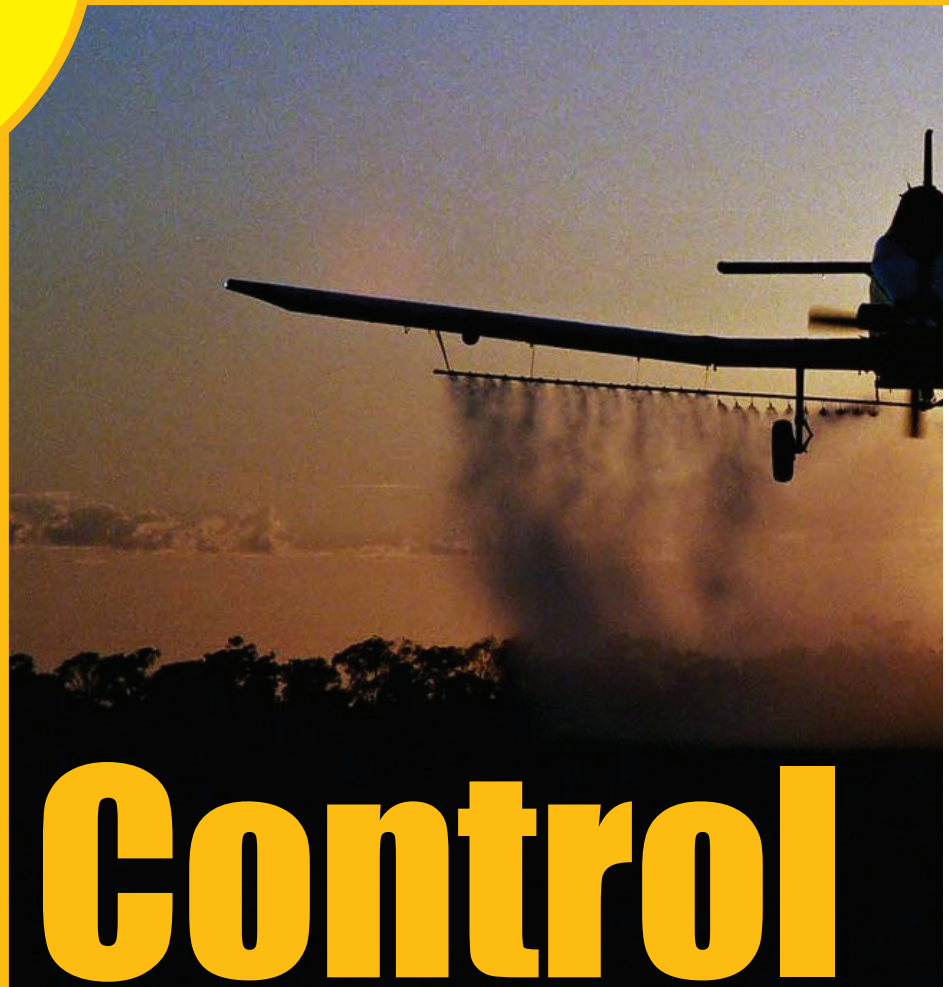
art to discerning students. It was his dream and the late Malayattoor Ramakrishnan's vision that was realized into a Magic Academy in Thiruvananthapuram in 1996. Now the Academy, well famous as the Asia's first of its kind, is a reliable shelter for magicians from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. The Academy offers a opulent services ranging from free insurance to free magic wares; educational scholarships to annual awards; and international magic conferences to festivals of indigenous street magicians. Besides these are a wide range of courses to suit the different tastes of interested candidates. The Academy stands singular in the whole world, by virtue of a couple of courses it has launched under the aegis of the Centre for Adult Continuing Education Extension (CACEE) of the Kerala University. Magic courses enjoying university support of this sort is first time in the history of magic.

Muthukad is synonym to magic. A country takes pride of him and magic fans across the world hope for more glittering feats to pop out from his magic sack. ■

An overview of the evolution of pest control in an era of growing concern against pesticides

The growing concern for greater protection of public health and environment, has had major impact on insect control programmes. This has necessitated not only the elimination of use of pesticides that persist in the environment, but also in minimising the use of all pesticides. After the advent of intensive agriculture, there has been a vast change in the scenario of pests and diseases.

Till 1940 inorganic insecticides like arsenicals, soaps, petroleum oils and botanicals were used as insecticides. The era of chemical pesticides began with the discovery of the insecticidal property of DDT by Paul Muller in 1939. This discovery could bring the Nobel Prize for medicine to Dr. Muller in 1948. DDT was used for dusting thousands of soldiers and prisoners during war time to control body louse. It



the Pest C

proved to be extremely effective against mosquitoes and houseflies. DDT was followed by other organochlorines, carbamates, organophosphates and synthetic pyrethroids. Later Juvenile Hormones, JH mimics, moulting hormones, pheromones, antifeedants etc were developed.

The success of high yielding varieties of wheat and



largest in the world and second largest in Asia Pacific region, its share in global turnover is only 1.5-2 per cent. The Indian pesticide production industry started with the setting up of a BHC technical plant at Rishra near Kolkata in 1952. In India, the consumption of technical pesticide in agriculture has shown a fast increase from 432 tonnes during 1953-54 to 72130 tonnes in 1991-92. But

in the recent past, change has been observed in the trends of pesticide consumption. Due to the adoption of bio intensive Integrated Pest Management strategy in various crops the consumption of chemical pesticides has come down significantly.

t Control

rice in Green Revolution was partially due to the protection umbrella of pesticides. The intensive and extensive use, misuse and abuse of pesticides during the ensuing decades caused widespread damage to the environment.

Usage Pattern

Though Indian pesticide industry is the fourth

The danger of pesticides to bees comes not only from direct contact poisoning, but also from the taking of poisoned nectar into hives.



Consumption of pesticides in India

Year	Quantity (Thousand Tonnes)
1994-95	61.36
1999-00	46.20
2004-05	40.67
2008-09	43.86

Source: Department of Agriculture and Co-operation, New Delhi

Pesticide consumption in India for agricultural purpose is 288 g/ha, while the global average is 900 g/ha. Andhra Pradesh and Punjab consume 47 percent of total pesticides. Cotton consumes 45 per cent of pesticides used in the country followed by vegetables/fruits(13-24 per cent) and rice(20 per cent).

The export of the pesticides have shown a growing trend. The export earning was Rs.2010 million in 1993-94, which rose to Rs. 10000 million in 1997-98 and 16000 million in 2000-2001. India exports synthetic Pyrethroid, Chlorpyrifos and few other pesticides.

Resistance to Insecticides

The occurrence of pesticide resistance in India was first noticed in insects of public health importance. Large amount of insecticides used under the National Malaria Control Programme from 1948 to 1960 resulted in the development of insecticide resistance in insect vectors of human diseases. In agriculture, development of resistance appeared comparatively later because appreciable amount of insecticide was used from 1970 onwards on agricultural crops raised using high yielding varieties, irrigation and fertiliser. Insecticide resistance occurs as a result of inappropriate and largescale use of pesticides particularly at sub lethal doses, repeated application of the same pesticide or similar group of pesticides over a period of time as well as under

dosing due to substandard pesticidal formulations. The application of pesticides may also bring resurgence of target pests against which the chemicals are applied and also lead to the outbreak of some pests hitherto unimportant. The introduction of lindane to control the aphids as well as boll weevil led to outbreaks of mites due to destruction of natural enemies.

The modernisation of agriculture have directly or indirectly led to increased incidence of pests and diseases. Monocropping, continuous cultivation of commercial crops, reduction in area of coarse cereals, minor millets etc. have raised many minor pests to the level of major pests. The number of insect pests that were considered important in paddy cultivation increased from three in 1965 to more than 13 in 1995.

Pesticide Residues

Pesticides are required during production, processing, storage and distribution of food. Thus food contains unavoidable residues of pesticides. Even in areas far away from the site of application pesticide residues esp., that

of organochlorines have been found dominating. Similarly bioaccumulation of these chemicals in milk, butter, meat and even human fat has been observed. Studies revealed that 86 percent of soil samples collected from agricultural lands of Punjab were contaminated with DDT, HCH, endrin and lindane. Residues of DDT have been detected in Yamuna and Ganga. In UK the presence of insecticides was reported in rain water. Snow from Arctic was found contaminated with insecticidal residue.

Earlier it was generally assumed that dilution in environment was a satisfactory answer to pesticide pollution. Today it is known that organochlorine compounds can persist in soil and water for periods of years to decades and they can be biomagnified in the tissues of invertebrates, fish, birds and mammals. The rate of disappearance of residues of insecticides is expressed in terms of half life, which is the time required for half of given quantity of material to dissipate. The half life of DDT is 3-10 years and that of heptachlor, lindane and dieldrin are 7-12, 2 and 1-7 years respectively.

The most economic insecticides have combined broad spectrum insect toxicity with extended persistence in the environment. This combination is now regarded as undesirable, and broad spectrum activity must be combined with limited persistence.

The pesticides are also harmful to beneficial fauna such as honey bees and natural enemies like parasites and predators. The danger of pesticides to bees comes not only from direct contact poisoning, but also from the taking of poisoned nectar into hives.



Pesticide residues in several crops like tea, coffee, spices, basmati rice etc have also affected our export of these commodities.

Health hazards

Pesticides can interfere with a numbers of biological processes in humans. The outcome of such toxic interference can include sterility, decreased fertility, increased foetal deaths, increased birth defects, other reproductive problems etc.

Studies revealed that occurrence of cancer, kidney failure, still birth, infertility etc have been increased in Punjab. Cases of blindness, cancer, liver disease and pesticide poisoning have been reported from the cotton growing districts of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

pesticide leaked into the food materials during transport. Several people died after consuming food prepared from contaminated wheat flour.

Government has banned the use of 30 pesticides, restricted the use of 13 pesticides including DDT, refused registration for 18 pesticides, allowed two pesticides for export and had banned import of four pesticides.

In 2006, the use of endosulfan throughout Kerala was put on hold by Govt. of India. In April 2011 a global ban with a phase off period was arrived at Stolkhom Convention. Now the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam

A pesticide tragedy in Kerala that claimed several lives in 1958 led to the enactment of the Insecticides Act, 1968. The import, manufacture, sale, transport, distribution and use of pesticides are regulated by this Act.



Safe Alternatives

Large number of natural products having biocidal activity have been discovered from plants, animals and microbial sources, but have been exploited only to a limited extent. Nicotine, rotenone, sabadilla, ryania and pyrethrum are the important botanical insecticides. Neem has shown selective activity against wide array of insects. Neem acts as a feeding deterrent, growth disruptor, repellent, ovipositional deterrent etc.

Dr. Jayaprakash of Central Tuber Crop Research Institute has developed a biopesticide from cassava leaves. According to him it is very effective against borer pests like red palm weevil of coconut and pseudostem borer of banana. A neem based insecticide against mealybug was also developed, spraying of which removes the waxy coating and exposes the pest.

Reports show that spraying of endosulfan in the cashew plantations of Kasargod since 1978, till 2001 created health disorders of very serious nature. Children were found to be worst affected with congenital anomalies, mental retardation, physical deformities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, hydrocephalus etc. Men and women were also affected with various chronic ailments.

Regulations

The import, manufacture, sale, transport, distribution and use of pesticides in India is being regulated under a comprehensive statute- The Insecticides Act, 1968. A pesticide tragedy in Kerala that claimed several lives in 1958 led to the enactment of this. Food containers were imported to Cochin Port along with lethal chemical Folidol. The

Convention, decided to list endosulfan under annex III. This makes Prior Informed Consent of importing countries necessary for export of the pesticide.

Integrated Approach

The combined impact of all problems of chemical pest control strategy led to the development of IPM concept. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) refers to an ecological approach in pest management in which all available techniques are consolidated in a unified programme, so that pest populations can be managed in such a manner that economic damage is avoided and adverse side effects are minimised. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) assigned a pivotal role to IPM in the agricultural

programmes and policies. During the last three decades IPM has moved from a peripheral position to the centre stage of agricultural production programmes.

Effort is to be made to keep insecticide use to the minimum and to rely to the extend possible on biological control and improved cultural practices and other methods to prevent the build up of insect populations to levels that cause economic damage. The following excerpt from 'Silent Spring' reflects the need to control the use of harmful chemicals- "There is no safe dose for a carcinogen and, if there was, we would not know what it was. We are eating these chemicals, possibly in small, possibly in large quantities, and certainly they are being stored in our livers and our fat." ■

The writer is Agricultural Officer, Farm Information Bureau, Thiruvananthapuram

An eye-opener of hard and horrible infanticide of species that may eventually lead to annihilation of life on earth

History is sullied with instances of infanticide perpetrated by hard hearted dictators and power mongering monarchs. Herod of Judea is said to have massacred all infants born at about the birth of Jesus. Atrocities perpetrated on humans are often decried. But the annihilation of mother earth's other children are connived at.

I wish to record my witness to such a cruel act. A year ago I went out to get some fish. Two of the important markets in Thiruvananthapuram were flooded

with tiny offspring of Ponnarameen (Butter Fish) weighing hardly two grams. Ponnarameen is one of the tastiest endemic varieties of fish in Kerala. A full grown Ponnarameen weighs about 2 kilograms. Chagrined by the horrible scene of mass infanticide, I didn't buy fish that day. Such hard hearted infanticides of life on Earth will finally end up in the total annihilation of the perpetrators themselves, namely the inhuman humans, owing to the depletion of the natural resources.

Infanticide of the Innocent





In countries like the USA such exploitation of resources is forbidden by law. The natural resource inspectors watch the fishing operations and if tiny baby fishes are caught they are let into the sea. Severe penalty is imposed on those who violate the laws in this regard. Such laws are prevalent in several European countries also. In Kerala, the ban on mechanised trolling is implemented at the beginning of the South West monsoon, which is only a symbolic step.

Several fish varieties have already vanished and many are on the verge of extinction. Very few in this country are really committed to the conservation of our marine and fresh water Pisces.

The rivers have become waste disposal ducts that carry all man-generated pollutants including factory effluents. This has become detrimental to the growth of fish and other marine animals. The larger marine animals swallow remnants of plastics and other materials which will gradually end up in their extinction. Dumping of waste cloth particles into the sea by the large apparel making units causes considerable hindrance to the fishermen. Many fishermen get wounded from the glass and metal wastes piled up on the

seashores. The mangroves which serve as a bulwark against sea erosion and sea disturbances are destroyed indiscriminately. Mangrove bushes are habitats and breeding spots of several water fauna and birds.

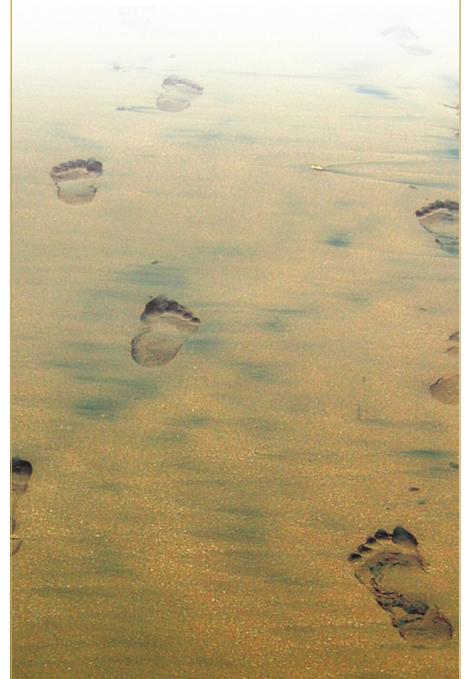
Global efforts like the Koyoto Protocol and the recent Convention on climate change held in Copenhagen etc. are all fruitless without action. The profit hungry industrialists and industrialised nations are ignoring the gravity of the situation. Tons of greenhouse gases released from their factories are heating up mother Earth.

The lopsided vision that the whole earth with all its flora and fauna are created for man is encouraging the destructive process of exploitation of the earth.

This is a heart-renting perpetration inflicted on nature. There ought to be strict measures to prevent destruction of the little off-springs of life on this earth. Organised action of the society should be initiated against such devastating activities of man. The bipedal homo has to be bridled in order to save this beautiful planet. Let us not undo what God has done and that is the right gesture to please the Almighty. ■

Not every footstep

can lead you through
the right path



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N C Senan

Theatre innovative

Amidst the influx of electronic media, the author looks at the way the Malayalam theatre thrives



In the Literary field of communication, Drama has a prominent place than any other art forms. It presents the human problems and its vicissitudes in an attractive and aesthetic way on the stage. Many of the developed countries have their own theatre culture and they utilise it for propagating ideas among the people. Before the advent of electronic medium, the dramatic art were the most important one. It has a history of 2500 years. Whereas the Malayalam theatre has a history of thousand years from the primitive tribal performances. And the modern theatre has a history of around 150 years. Within this short span of time, Malayalam Dramas improved a lot. Thanks for the dedicated dramatists and actors who had done a Herculean task for making it more enchanting.

The history of modern Malayalam Drama dates back to the year 1881. The first ever noted episode was the translation of



Kalidasa's "Abhinana Sakunthalam" by the renowned literary; man Kerala Varma Valiyakoyi Thampuran. Though the translation brought out in print no one was interested to perform it on the stage, As the translation had blended with Sanskrit again Thampuran softened the language. After that it was staged in many places of Kerala. With the success of this drama on stage, some of the literary men wrote dramas for Malayalam audience. Among them the notable dramas were kodungalloor Kochu Thampuran's "Kalyani Natakam" Kunjukuttan Thampuran's "Chandrika", K.C. Kesava Pilla's Lakshmi Kalyanam, Varghese Mappilay's Ebrayakutty and Chathukutty Mannadiar's 'Uttara Rana Chantham' etc. In the early dramas, the verses had as much importance as the prose dialogues. The dramas were almost musical productions. The impact of Tamil musical plays were very popular among the people of Kerala in those days. T.C. Achutha Menon's "Sangeetha Naishatham", Chakrapani Variors 'Harichandra' and K.C. Kesava Pilla's 'Sadarama' were the most popular. Some social dramas were also written during this period. K.C's 'Marriage of Lakshmi', Kocheepan Tharakan's 'Mariamma' etc, were notable dramas. Another notable play writer of the period was C.F. Andrews, who had been written well known dramas such as, " Janasundari", " Pardeesanastum etc. with this experience of writing Tamil dramas he came to the Malayalam Theatre. And his dramas were presented by the notable artist P.J. Cherian. Incidentally, he became the first producer of a Malayalam film entirely worked by Malayalis. Till then, Tamilians were the producers of Malayalam films.

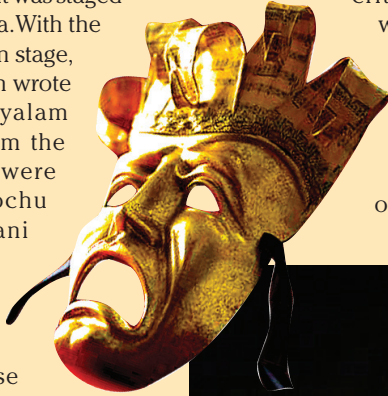
During the same period Malayalam drama's based on purana's also appeared. The important ones were Thottakat Ikkavamma's " Subhadra Arjun" Kunjukyttan Thampuran's "Umavivaham" and Naduvath Achan Namboothiri's "Bhagavath Doothu" etc. Many English dramas were imitated and rendered into Malayalam. The first important work was the translation of

Shakespear's 'Taming of the Shrew' by Varghese Mappilai. The translations and Imitations increased and most of them were not up to the mark. Munshi Rama Kurup put an end to this trends by writing a satirical drama "Chakkee Chankaram". This severe criticism presented

with sarcasm opened the eyes of dramatists to a certain extent.

British made many changes in our educational

Velukutty, Sebastian Kunju Kunju Bhagavather were the actors. Velukutty who acted as a female character in this drama got kudos from the public. Some of the notable actor's of the period were Augustine Joseph, Kutteeswaran, Kollam Narayana Pillai, Attingal Nanu Pillai, Paravoor Krishnan Kutty, Kayamkulam Samuel, Kani Sukumaran Kutty etc. Ladies were not permitted to act on the stage at that period by the society. During this time, a native of Palluruthy K.N. Lakshmi appeared to act in dramas and it was a daring attempt.



system. The educational people and writers of Malayalam thought of writing dramas. As such a noted literary man C.V. Raman Pillai wrote certain stories and presented it in Thiruvananthapuram. That was a turning point in the dramatic field. His first drama was " Chandra Mukhi Vilasam". The theme was based on the life of upper middle class Nair society and also the first social drama criticising the society. His other satires were 'Kurippillakalari,' Pandathe Pachan' and 'Butler pappan' etc. All these pointed the social evils of the day.

Around this time Swami Brahma Vrathan, a dramatist, wrote a drama based on Kumaran Asan's " Karuna" and it was a novel attempt. Ochira

In the year 1936, the eminent historian and journalist Kesari Balakrishna Pillai, translated Ebson's famous drama "The Ghost" in Malayalam by name "Prethangal." Another attempt was "Mullakkal Bhavanam" written by C. Narayana Pillai, a journalist turned writer, based on Ebson's "Rosmer Home" in the year 1940. Ebson was a distinguished writer in Western theatre. Through this translations Malayalam theater activists come to know more about the world scenario. It was a time when drastic changes were observed in literature and other art forms.

E.V. Krishna Pillai, an assistant



and follower of C.V. Raman Pillai, wrote two dramas based on C.V.'s novels such as 'Sitalakshmi' and 'Raja Kesava Das'. E.V. was a patron of the theatrical groups. The annual celebrations of Sree Chithra thirunal library prompted the production of new dramas. His Pennarasunadu, B.A. Mayavi, Pranaya Commission were hilarious farces. M.P. Kesava Pillai, N.P. Chellappan Nair, T.N. Gopinadhan Nair Kuttanad Ramakrishna Pillai were the writers of the period. They were all good stage actors also.

Around this time some amateur troupes emerged in Thiruvananthapuram and presented dramas at the V.J.T Hall. The notable artistes were Kainakara Brothers, T.N. Gopinathan Nair, N.P. Chellappan Nair, Jagathy N.K. Achari, P.K. Vikraman Nair, Sukumaran Nair, Guptan Nair etc. They performed historical and social dramas and were getting support from the Maharaja of Travancore. By this time stage dramas became very popular throughout Kerala.

In Malabar, V.T. Bhattathiripad

came with a social drama by name "From Kitchen to the world", which showed the Nambuthiri women suffering untold miseries due to the marriage systems of the community. M.P. Bhattathiripad's "Rithumati" was also about the pitiable condition of the women in the society. This drama was more powerful and dramatically effective. Some enterprising youngsters came to the field with more innovative ideas. The socio-political atmosphere was favoured to bring out such type of dramas. Many dramas were written based on the inequalities arising from freedom and capitalism. K. Damodarans "Pattabakki" was the story of a widow, her son who was a worker and the background was the landlord - tenant conflicts.

With the political backing some theatre movement was also taking place. The major one and very popular was KP AC in the southern part of Kerala. Their first attempt was. "you made me a communist". The

Many dramas were written based on the inequalities arising from freedom and capitalism



labourers of Kerala whole heartedly welcomed this and had given full support. In this period some of the top short story writers, had entered to write dramas. Among them Kesava Dev, Ponkunnam Varkey, Cherukad. K.T Mohamed, S.L. Puram, Edasseri, C.L. Jose, Kaladi Gopi, were famous. They all presented the idea for changing the then prevailing system of the society.

Among them, Thoppil Bhasi was the topmost playwright and his dramas like "Sarvekallu" Mudiyanaya puthran, Mooladhanam, Aswamedham, Sarasayya and Thulabharam were worth to be mentioned. The political and social arena required a turning point for which these dramas triggered revolutionary ideas among the people. The downtrodden and the labourers were awakened and pleaded for a better tomorrow. The right to fight for justice awakened the people by these dramas. So dramas were an effective tool for making social change in Kerala.

By this time K.T Muhammed started his own drama troupe in Malabar presented dramas on various social problems to enrich the standard of dramatic art, rather than propagating any ideas. His dramas were perfect in theatre craft. Ethu bhomiyanu, Karavatta Pasu, Srishti, Sthithi Samaharam, Kadalpalam, were notable dramas. In Thiruvananthapuram Kalanilayam Krishnan Nair started a troupe and presented historical dramas. Krishnan Nair established the first permanent theater in Kerala. Jagathy

N.K. Achari and Cheri were the writers of these dramas.

With the coming of N. Krishna Pillai, a teacher turned writer a new trend were attained in Malayalam Theatre. He was a follower of Ebson's dramas. That made novelty in themes and its presentation. His famous dramas were Bhagna Bhavanam, Kanyaka, Balabalam, Anuranjanam etc. The

themes were more appealing; N. Krishna Pillai considered as a trend setter of the Malayalam theatre movements.

The quality of our dramas was slowly picked up. A noted playwright of the fifties C.J Thomas had a prominent place. His contributions

were "A van veendum varunnu", Crime 27 in 1128, A Manushyan Nee Thanne, Visha Vrisham etc.

In 1953, another notable dramatist N N Pillai appeared with his own troupe Viswakerala Kalasamithi in Kottayam and he did not adopt any method of Bhasi or K.T Mohammed. He tried to put the social life by a bit ahead through his dramas and that was his ultimate aim. Prethalokam, Wine glass, Mareechika, Eswaran Arastil, Cross Belt, showed the ideas of this reality. N.N. Pillai was a master craftsman in Malayalam Dramas.

C.N. Sreekandan Nair, another prominent dramatist was a lone walker in this field and had written social themes in the beginning. His 'Nashta Kachavadam' was a trend setter and got

kudos from the public. His other dramas 'A Kani Thinnaruthu, Manyathayude Mara were also worth to mention. After that he 'wrote some dramas based on epic 'Ramayana' such as Kanchana Seetha; "Saketham" and "Lankalakshmi" etc. By adopting this he brought out the peoples agony and other problems set in the modern background. It was really a hard task and in it he succeeded. "Kali" another drama written by him put a new trend in Malayalam Dramas.

Another famous dramatist of the period was S.L Puram Sadanandan, who started 'Suryasoma' a theatre troupe and brought out some notable dramas. One More Man Turned Thief, Worthless Man, Daughter of Fire etc. which were dealt with social injustice and also advocate political solutions.

By this time many professional troupes were established in various parts of the state. Any festival activity was incomplete without performing a professional drama for a long period which extends to the present day. Drama troupes became a positive business. Thousands of temple festivals and other social activists gave stages for these troupes. Many professional dramas by various troupes which became popular were made into cinema.

During this period many experimental theatre enthusiasts came to the field with fresh ideas. They were talented and had earned a reputation as the noted activists of theatre movements in Kerala. Among them Kavalam Narayana Panickar, Narendra Prasad, Karmana Janadharan Nair, Vayala Vasudevan Pillai, etc were very prominent. They were presenting dramas by adopting the trends from western theatres. And it was appreciated by the enlightened people of Kerala. Like in Cinema modern trends created new age drama also.

Those who studied the dramatic arts from colleges systematically, entered this field with fresh idea and presenting new forms of dramas in various places. As the standard of the world theatre has gone ahead our drama activists have to do a lot of work to compete with them in the years to come. ■



Nasila Ratheesh



Violin Musical Love





Sibi Malayil, known to handle emotional cinemas with great care, has become technically fine tuned and glitzy than his older films. As usual, with the regular potboilers, he comes again with a new movie 'Violin.' It is just another formula movie, missing the intrinsic emotional depth. The central route seems to be-cast a good looking pair. It also chooses a tried-and-tested story, garnished with sugary, passionate, delightful situations, with a couple of lively songs and shoot at panoramic locales. The formula seems to be working good for quite some years, but here the situations are not so passionate, the lilting scores are absent and above all the affecting intensity is hardly visible.

The movie follows the lives of Angel (Nithya Menon) and her two aunts Annie (Lakshmi Ramakrishnan) and Mercy (Reena Basheer), who lives alone in the big 'Rosevilla' secluded from the world around, as they find that every man around is really treacherous for their calm life and good names. They make a living by baking cakes and occasionally going to Churches, while Angel is also taking tuitions to students interested in

playing violin. She is an expert violinist, the craze starting with the violin that her late mother Rose had presented before her death.

Abey (Asif Ali) is an innocent villager and a musician who happens to be in the town, looking for better fortunes and once he takes the attic of the villas as the tenant of Angel and her aunts, their life takes a sea change. They start to think positive and their life suddenly feels like being in heaven. After the mandatory initial resistance from Angel, romance strikes, and the two fall in love. The rest of the love story is what the movie is all about.

The first half of 'Violin' is impressive and floats freely but the problem lies in the second hour when a few tracks throw a spanner in the otherwise smooth proceedings. Even the climax, although well shot, is forced and pass, since a number of films including Maniratnam's 'Alai Payuthe' have had similar endings. The scriptwriter Viju Ramachandran has dealt the Anglo Indian surroundings and life with that 'cliched' sincerity, though it may not be a fresher theme for Bollywood viewers.

The highlight of the movie seems to be the lead pair, especially Asif Ali, who is only getting better with every release. He registers an impact and displays qualities to hit the top slot, if he goes on with a fine selection of his roles. Nithya Menon, who rightly has the largest of the fans among young generation, is good, though not exceptional. Lakshmi Ramakrishnan, Reena Basheer, and Chembil Ashokan are some exceptional roles while talented Abhishek Raveendran with his interesting one liners, once again proves that he is a talent to look out for in future.

For any love story to strike a chord, it ought to be embellished with a lilting musical score. In this case, the music is classy and not so melodious to remain in our minds for long. But the technical side is topnotch with Manoj Pillai contributing some excellent visuals.

On the whole, 'Violin' could have been an interesting fare, but is let mediocre by an average direction. The movie, with its aggressive promotion and charismatic lead pair, may still manage to stay in the release centres for quite some weeks. ■

S Radhakrishnan



Obesity reduces brain power

Obesity subtly diminishes memory and other features of thinking and reasoning even among seemingly healthy people, an international team of scientists report. At least some of these impairments appear reversible through weight loss. Researchers also report one likely mechanism for those cognitive deficits: damage to the wiring that links the brain's information-processing regions.

A number of studies in recent years have shown that individuals with diseases linked to obesity, including cardiovascular disease, hypertension and type-2 diabetes, don't score as well on cognitive tests as less hefty individuals do. To test whether weight alone – and not disease – might be partially responsible, 150 obese individuals were taken for a series of cognitive tests. These people weighed on average just under 300 pounds, although some were substantially heavier. Two-thirds would shortly undergo weight-loss surgery.

Scores on the tests were assessed against very healthy people. Although nearly one-quarter of the obese participants' scores on memory and learning actually fell within what researchers consider the impaired range.

Saving babies with bed nets

In sub-Saharan Africa – where malaria accounts for 16 percent of deaths in children under age five – insecticide-treated bed nets saved the lives of roughly 240,000 preschool-age children between 2002 and 2008. Researchers in England and Switzerland analysed the impacts of 151 million bed nets issued by



aid groups to families in 34 sub-Saharan countries.

Comparisons to rates before the malaria controls were implemented showed that 31 malaria deaths in children under five were prevented for every \$1 million spent on bed nets and residual indoor insecticide spraying.

Sugar's hidden diet-busting role

Diets rich in table sugar can sabotage fish oil's health benefits, a study in mice finds. Researchers in Denmark and Norway fed the mice high-fat diets for

two months. Some rodents got corn oil as their fat, others fish oil. Compared with animals dining on low-calorie chow, those on high-fat diets developed pre-diabetic changes. Those on the fish oil diet gained less weight and developed less inflammatory fat (a risk factor associated with certain chronic diseases) – except when the diet derived much of the rest of its calories from sugar instead of protein.



Plastic ingredient linked to diabetes

Women exposed to relatively high amounts of phthalates, compounds used in plastics and as solvents, are substantially more likely to be diabetic, a study in Mexico finds. All participants had been healthy and serving as controls in a cancer trial. Although previous studies have linked phthalates with risk of obesity – itself a risk factor for diabetes – the newly identified association appears independent of obesity, the researchers report online June 21 in environmental research.





Rare earth elements in ocean sediments

Mud at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean contains surprising concentrations of rare earth elements, 17 chemicals with exotic names like neodymium and europium that are critical to technologies ranging from cell phones and televisions to fluorescent light bulbs and wind turbines.

Hot plumes from hydrothermal vents pulled these materials out of seawater and deposited them on the seafloor, bit by bit, over tens of millions of years. One square patch of metal-rich mud 2.3 kilometres wide might contain enough rare earths to meet most of the global demand for a year, Japanese geologists report July 3 in *Nature Geoscience*.

Superelastics can take the heat

Superelastic alloys put under tremendous stress have an unrivalled ability to snap back into shape afterward, and now one of them can also take the heat. A new material remains super elastic over a broad range of temperatures (-196 to 240 degrees Celsius).

This alloy can be used in cars, planes, spacecraft and in any environment subject to extremely high and low temperatures. And because the new material is made of iron and other common metals, large quantities could be incorporated into buildings to dampen vibrations caused by earthquakes, researchers at Tohoku University in Japan report in the July 1 *Science*.

Massage better for relieving back pain

A hands-on approach to back pain may yield better results than popping pills. A new study that compares two types of massage with standard treatment for chronic lower-back pain found that massage relieved pain and improved daily function more than the usual treatments, including pain killers, muscle relaxants and other drugs. The improvements with one-hour massages once a week for 10 weeks lasted at least six months, researchers from Washington and Oregon report in the July 5 *Annals of Internal Medicine*. The results were the same for both structural massages – which relieves tension in specific tissues and joints – and relaxation massage, also called Swedish massage, which aims for overall relaxation.

Aircrafts can trigger rain

Airplanes taking off and landing at airports may be affecting the very weather around them. When a plane flies through a cloud containing supercooled water, which is liquid despite being below water's freezing point, the plane triggers the water to turn to ice crystals and fall out as snow or rain. Such supercooled clouds might exist around U.S. airports some 5 to 6 percent of the time, scientists led by Andrew Heymsfield of the National Centre for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado, report in the July 1 *Science*.





Murukku or Chaklis

Bengal Gram Flour - 3 cups | Rice - 1½ cups | Hot oil - 1½ tsp

Oil - For frying **Grind to smooth Paste:** Garlic - 2 flakes | Red Chillies - 6 | Green chillies - Curry Leaves - 2 sprigs | Salt - to taste

Sieve both kinds of flour together; add ground paste and mix well. Pour hot oil and add water if necessary. Blend well with the flour. Divide the flour equally into six portions. Sprinkle water to each portion separately to form thick dough just before frying. Prepare small murukkus using three eyed disc in a chakli maker i.e., by pressing it straight away to the hot oil. Deep fry few at a time in this hot oil till crisp both sides. Store in an airtight container.



Rice-gram flour chakli

Raw rice - 4 cups
Roasted gram flour - 1 cup
Butter - 50 gms
Salt - to taste
Oil - to deep fry

Wash and soak rice in enough water for 2 hours. Strain water and grind to a thick batter. Mix roasted gram flour, butter and salt to this paste. Using a three hole disc in a chakli maker prepare small chaklis on top of a banana leaf or a wet cloth. Put in hot oil and fry till crisp. Store in an air tight container after removing its excess oil.

Sago Chaklis

Fine Sago - 1 cup | Rice Flour - 6" | Oil - 2½ big thsp | Mustard seeds - ¼ tsp | Lemon juice - 2 thsp |

Sour thick curds - 1 cup | Oil for deep frying | Green chillies - 20 nos | Salt - To Taste | Asafoetida - ¼ tsp

Wash and soak sago in sour curds overnight. Next day, grind it to a smooth paste along with chillies, salt and asafoetida. Heat oil and add mustard seeds. When it splutters, spur flour to this paste, squeeze lemon juice and mix well.

Divide the prepared flour into 4-5 parts. Sprinkle water to one portion and prepare a thick dough. Apply oil to the chaklimaka (inside). Use a three eyed round disc and fill it with the dough. Prepare big chaklis directly over the hot oil. Fry till golden brown on both sides, turning over gently. Put it in a colander to drain excess oil.



Moong Dal Chaklis

Green GM dal - 1 cup (dehusked)
Steamed maida - 2
Salt - 1 tsp
Butter - 2

Oil - For deep frying

Wash and cook dal in cups of water till soft. Mash it well when water is absorbed completely. Cool it thoroughly and mix with salt, butter till it blends properly. Add steamed, sieved maida little by little and mix till it forms thick dough. Use single star disc in chaklimaker and prepare small chaklis over a polythene sheet or on banana leaf. Transfer to the hot oil and deep fry till crisp.

