

Athidhi Devo Bhava

Government of Kerala have announced the tourism vision 2025 of the State. The document states the intension of the Government to make Kerala an upmarket, high quality tourist destination through rational utilisation of resources ensuring that the heritage, culture, monuments, ecosystem including forests, backwaters, beaches will be protected and preserved in its present glory.

The document also analyses in depth, the strengths and weakness of the State to undertake this mission. The strengths include the natural beauty provided by the sea, beaches, backwaters, mountains, forests, rivers etc., all close to one another, providing the traveller better opportunity to have diverse experience within short distances. These strengths we can and will make use of to the maximum. How ever there are weakness like inadequacy of infrastructure facilities to match the expectation of the tourists and lack of well defined policies, which the Government have taken initiatives to overcome. But restrictive Airline Policy of the Government of India, restrictive Coastal regulation Zone etc. are beyond the control of the State to overcome. I am sure that the people's representatives form the State will try their level best to convince the Government of India that these restrictive policies or acts are to be modified or amended in the best interests of the Nation.

But there is a limit to what can be done by Government and organised institutions. In every nation or area where tourists prefer to go, we can see that it is the people that have contributed to it. As citizens with civic sense, we can keep our public places clean, provide better services to guests without intruding into their privacy, give them just deal etc. In short we have to overtly exhibit our traditional belief - Athidhi Devo Bhava - that the Guest is God.

Chief Editor

Tourism Vision 2025

Started as a State Hospitality Department in 1950s, the Department of Tourism came into being in 1960s. However the functions of the department were confined to running guest houses, upkeep of residential bungalows of ministers and providing hospitality and other arrangements for VVIPs. It was only during the Seventh Plan that the tourism promotion activities found a place in the functioning of the Department of Tourism. Kerala Tourism has recorded remarkable growth in the last few years. The number of foreign tourists and domestic tourists visiting the state has crossed two lakhs and 50 lakhs respectively. The revenue generated in the economy of Kerala due to tourism is estimated to be nearly Rs.4000 crores which is 6.29% of the State's GDP. Tourism has generated employment in Kerala to the tune of nearly seven lakhs (based on study by Tata Consultancy Services).

Kerala has emerged as the most acclaimed tourist destination of the country in the recent past. World Travel and Tourism Council has selected Kerala as a Partner State. National Geographic Traveller af-

ter two years of research has chosen Kerala, as one of the 50 must see destinations of a lifetime. Kerala has been stated as one of the 10 paradises of the world.

There has been a constant increase in the state plan allocation from Rs.6.7 crores in 1994-95 to Rs.40 crores in 2001-2002. The central allocation has also gone up from Rs.2.1 crores in 1995-96 to Rs.14 crores in 2001-2002.

The Government has declared tourism as an industry as far back as in 1986 and offers incentives and concessions to the industry to promote tourism products in the state and to attract private investment.

Objectives of the Tourism Vision Statement are to make tourism, Kerala's core competency sector, to generate employment and enhance productivity, to promote and market Kerala Tourism prod-

Tourism Vision Statement

To make Kerala, the God's Own Country, an upmarket high quality tourist destination through rational utilisation of resources with focus on integrated development of infrastructure sector conserving and preserving the heritage and environment and enhancing productivity, income, creating employment opportunities, alleviating poverty thereby making tourism the most important sector for the socio-economic development and environment protection of the State.

CONSERVE NATURE, CULTURE AND PROMOTE TOURISM

ucts at national and international level thereby making Kerala a premier global tourism destination, to define and endorse the role of the Government as a catalyst and facilitator for the growth of tourism industry, to rationalise tourism related legislations and policies of the Government that it is tourism friendly and promotes tourism growth, to create awareness and tourism consciousness among the people in general and among the taxi drivers, policemen, bus conductors, porters, customs and emigration officers, and others with whom tourists interact in particular thereby removing prejudices and misconceptions and to make Kerala Society a tourism friendly society, to develop and improve roads, drinking water supply, electricity and power supply, sewage and sanitation systems, signages, transport systems like roads, rail, sea, inland water and air for selected tourist centres, to promote sustainable and eco-friendly tourism in the State based on the carrying capacity of the destinations, to conserve and preserve the art, culture and heritage of the State, to develop and promote new innovative tourism products, lesser known destinations, art forms, cuisines, monuments and handicrafts, to identify, conserve and preserve special tourism zones, to develop and promote KITTS, KIHMS and IHMCT into institutions par excellence in India and regulate the syllabi and training facilities of other institutions to maintain quality standards and to involve PRIs and NGOs in the development of tourism infrastructure and tourism awareness.

SWOT Analysis Strengths

The state is well known for smooth law and order, peace and tranquility, as one of the ten Paradises Found by the National Geo-

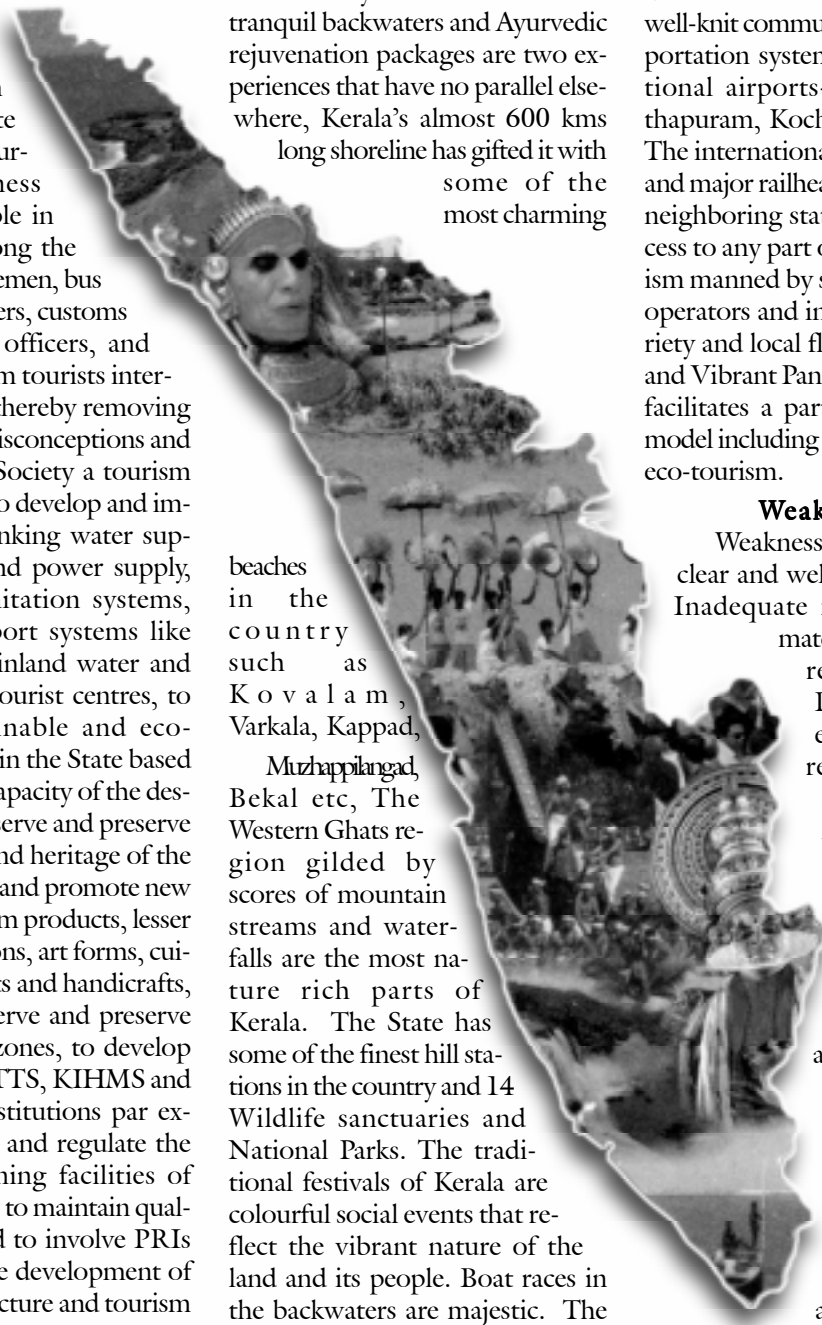
graphic Traveller, Kerala is among the 50 places in the world recommended to be visited in a lifetime. Kerala offers a wide variety of tourist attractions and Kerala's small land area gives it the added advantage of being the best venture for 'multi destination tourism', Houseboat holidays in the 900 kms of tranquil backwaters and Ayurvedic rejuvenation packages are two experiences that have no parallel elsewhere, Kerala's almost 600 kms long shoreline has gifted it with some of the most charming

beaches in the country such as Kovalam, Varkala, Kappad, Muzhappilangad, Bekal etc, The Western Ghats region gilded by scores of mountain streams and waterfalls are the most nature rich parts of Kerala. The State has some of the finest hill stations in the country and 14 Wildlife sanctuaries and National Parks. The traditional festivals of Kerala are colourful social events that reflect the vibrant nature of the land and its people. Boat races in the backwaters are majestic. The traditional art forms of the state are spectacular. Kerala also has a rich and singular cultural heritage. Above all, Kerala is India's most advanced society with fully literate

people, the world-class health care systems, the lowest infant mortality rates, highest life expectancy rates and an excellent quality of life. The state has a long history of communal harmony and has not experienced any major law and order problems. It is a safe and secure destination. The state also has a well-knit communication and transportation system. Three international airports- at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode. The international seaport at Kochi and major railheads and trains from neighboring states ensure easy access to any part of the State. Tourism manned by small and medium operators and investors giving variety and local flavour to products and Vibrant Panchayati Raj system facilitates a participative tourism model including the components of eco-tourism.

Weaknesses

Weaknesses are absence of clear and well defined policies, Inadequate infrastructure to match the expectation, restrictive Airline Policy of the Government of India, restrictive Coastal Regulation Zone, lack of quality connectivity, distance from major markets, increased neglect of solid and liquid waste management system, lack of quality shopping and recreation facility, lack of regulatory mechanism for sustainable development and quality controls, dearth of funds in implementation of tourism projects, lack of coordination by various line departments in providing infrastructure, high percentage of low yield foreign tourists, lack



of professionalism, lack of expertise in preparation of tourism plans, perception as a militant trade union area, high and prohibitive taxation policy, lack of better rail facilities, lack of positive approach to tourism, tendency to overcharge tourists for services and absence of major international companies.

Opportunities

Vast untapped potential on heritage tourism, backwater tourism, eco-friendly tourism, health tourism and pilgrimage tourism.

Prospective private investors in India and abroad who would be interested in investing in Kerala.

Good brand image of the God's Own Country for targeting high spending, upmarket tourists.

Availability of high quality human resources.

Low credit-deposit ratio, hence availability of funds for investment from financial institutions.

Threats

Unbridled and indiscriminate growth of tourism will lead to problems of pollution, environmental and ecological hazards and cultural degradation.

Over emphasis on tourism alone may lead to economic recession in periods of down turn, losing competitiveness to other States. Similarly placed States may offer significantly better services, if action is not taken to remove weaknesses.

Vision Targets are to increase earnings from tourism at the rate of 10% annually, to achieve an annual rate of growth of 7% in foreign tourist arrivals and 9% growth in domestic tourists, to create employment opportunities of 10000 every year, to add required hotel rooms in star categories every year, to innovate and promote at least one new tourism product/destination every year.

Strategy is to elevate tourism as the economic and employment priority of the State by using tourism as the vehicle of growth for physical, social and economic develop-



Tea Plantations of Munnar, a hill resort station

ment of the State, to promote sustainable tourism development with focus on conservation and preservation of Heritage through participation of panchayathi raj Institutions, to ensure quality services in all areas of tourism in the form of regulation, classification and monitoring, to develop infrastructure through private sector and private-public partnership, with Government acting as a facilitator and catalyst, to develop and promote tourism products with continuous focus on backwaters, Ayurveda, performing arts, pilgrim centres, cuisines and eco-tourism. While promoting Ayurveda, the value of naturopathy, herbal medicines and tribal medicines will also be given due importance, to concentrate on development of basic infrastructure by coordinating all line departments, to create sufficient quality human resources in the field of tourism within the State and strengthen the institutional mechanism, to develop and promote souvenir, handicrafts, artifacts and shopping industry, to enact proper legislation to sustain the industry and to regulate tourism activities through Government, industry and PRI collaboration, to explore and develop new markets for Kerala Tourism products at domestic and international levels, to conserve and preserve the unique cultural heri-

tage of the State, to ensure the safety and security of tourists.

Action Plan

1.To elevate tourism as the economic employment priority

Long Term

Department of Tourism will function as the nodal agency in coordinating all the activities related to tourism being undertaken by different sectors of economy under different names;

To develop mechanisms to protect the tourism industry from the adverse effects of multilateral agreements, like GATTS, WTO etc;

Include tourism in the school and college curriculum to create awareness among youths.

Medium Term

Encourage studies on potential of tourism sector compared to other sectors of economy in the State;

Conduct scientific studies on the inter-sectoral issues affecting the development of tourism.

Short Term

To have an apex body with Chief Minister as Chairman, and Ministers and Secretaries of Tourism, Forest, Irrigation, Power, Revenue, Public Works, Local Self Government, Industry, Finance, Culture, Transport, Fisheries, IT, Health, Science & Technology, Vice Chairman of State Planning

Board, Director of Tourism, and 4 nominated tourism experts as members to discuss and decide the inter-sectoral issues in development of tourism;

Conduct scientific studies on impact of tourism on income and employment through Tourism Satellite Accounting;

Strengthen the collection of statistics on tourist arrivals, tourist profile, expenditure pattern etc;

Conduct awareness campaign through local bodies, District Tourism Promotion Councils, clubs and social organisations;

Prepare short films on the benefits of tourism and broadcast in visual media and at prominent places such as railway stations.

2. To pursue sustainable tourism development with focus on Conservation and Preservation of Heritage

Long Term

Asses carrying capacity of all the tourist centres to regulate the developments accordingly;

Establish systems and procedures to enforce and include core components of sustainable tourism development vis-a-vis conservation, preservation and benefit sharing with local communities/people.

Medium Term

Prepare Area Development Plans for all tourism destinations and to regulate the developments accordingly;

Plans and implementation to be reviewed and suitably modified periodically.

Short Term

Enact Tourism Conservation, Preservation and Trade Act to guide & regulate the tourism growth & development;

Identify Special Tourism Zones and enforce the Act to regulate developments and to conserve the heritage;

Encourage Industry Associations to impose regulations on the industry on their own for preventing unethical or illegal activity;

Take up studies on carrying capacity assessment for all the major destinations;

Involve the community in the planning, awareness building and benefits sharing from the tourism projects and in implementation stages of all the projects;

Make environmental impact assessment for all the major projects as a prerequisite for sanction.

3. To Guarantee quality services in all sectors of tourism

Long Term

Allow only approved tourism units of Department of Tourism to function as tourism units in the state;

Medium Term

Encourage units to upgrade quality. Improve enforcement of existing legislation for this by various departments.

Short Term

Enforce legislation for the approval of tourism units such as accommodation providers, restaurant, tour operators, tourist transport operators, ayurveda centres, houseboats, recreation centres, cultural centres, tourism sports,

amusement parks, home stays etc. as a symbol of quality.

Ensure that only approved units will find place in the publicity material published by Department of Tourism and be eligible for incentives offered by the Department from time to time.

Inculcate a spirit of service among functionaries concerned with tourism.

4. To create and develop infrastructure through private Sector

Long Term

Ensure withdrawal of Government from direct running of all tourism business activities;

Withdraw all financial incentives to private sector investment and encourage the sector to invest in more open and competitive environment.

Medium Term

Try joint venture with major hotel chains within the country both in private and public sectors;

Ensure regular meeting of the Apex Body under the chairmanship of Chief Minister to address any issue related to provisions and basic infrastructure facilities to tourism units.

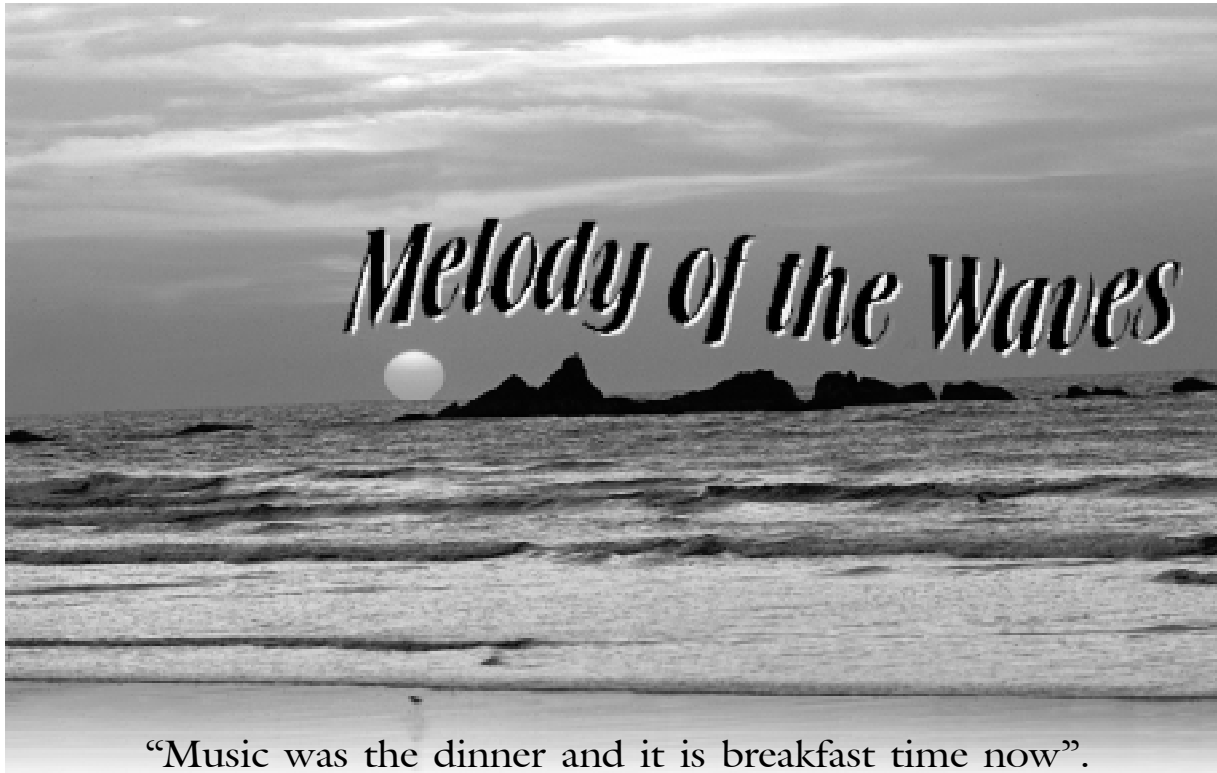
Short Term

Introduce Single window systems for clearing tourism projects;

Encourage private investors to avail loans from financial institutions such as SIDBI, KSIDC etc. in large-scale infrastructure projects;

Establish separate cell in financial institutions like KSIDC and





“Music was the dinner and it is breakfast time now”.

“Yes, the day was breaking.”

The deliberate slow motion entry of the Sun had commenced.

T . N . Gopakumar

Chief of Programmes, Asianet

This title might sound a bit odd for those unfamiliar with sedate evenings in South Indian beaches. India though blessed with seas for most of its states have a few landlocked communities which form the largest Indian States. But Lady Nature (Mother Nature would be an expression which would devirginize this subject) had blessed these lands with the big rivers, Ganga, Jamuna, Godhavari and many more. In turn, the Lady gave rainy hills and waterholds to a few other lands which approximate with seas at a reasonable distance.

Kerala was blessed on all counts, to the point of jealousy. Kerala was blessed with 44 rivers, blessed with Western Ghats which are blessed with thick forests and valleys and a good coast all along the West. The backwaters come as a bonus even to those diehard cynics who would defy even these beauties.

I was with one of those native-born cynics who, by sheer misfortune of lack of travel outside the State, had grown more cynical over the years. We were at Mararikulam beach 10 kilometers off Alappuzha town, an hours' drive from Kochi.

It was late evening and we thought of having our packed dinner at a non-tourist point. It was, by sheer accident, a night of good moonlight. It was not a full moon day, but it had the shadowed splendor of a Beauty in hiding whose looks were piercing through the sky clouds. Though it was a season of Monsoon rains, the sky was clear for us.

“Rains would be welcome, even if it comes”. Said my cynic friend. “Excepting spoiling our dinner pack”, he added to prove that he is still the cynic. So immersed I was before the sight of the beauties clouds kissing the Arabian, I put my head back on the rock we were resting and watched the dozens of

fishermen who were pushing their boats into the waves. It would be a long night and a day, or one more night before they return with their ‘Chakara’, the sea harvest of fishes. I recalled our famous tunes of ‘Chemmeen’, the film which was a hit in South Asia, all shot in the beaches between Kollam and Kochi-- mostly Purakkad, a little south from where we were resting on that evening. The myth was that the lady in the land, if she betrays the husband in the seas, the unfortunate fisherman would die due to the curse of ‘Kadamma’, the Sea Goddess. It is a cruel myth on the men and the film perpetuated the apprehension of disloyalties of all men who take to seas in that era.

My eyes travelled back to Mararikulam beach

“Look at that and their excitement” I advised my friend. Well, they would not enjoy it if it rains when they are in deep seas’. No

defeating a cynic of this nature, I thought and rested.

My friend also spread himself and closed his eyes. There was silence for a while and I kept my eyes on the fishing boats going deep into the ocean and melting into the silver clouds which bordered the sea and our vision.

Suddenly my friend jumped up and sat gaping at the sea. "What happened?" I could not understand. He showed me a sign which suggested silence. I went silent. He closed his eyes and sat in deep concentration. It took a while and but for minor shifts in his body movements, there was no change. I was getting fed up with this drama and, at the same time, was getting a little worried. Is this fellow going crazy?

"The food is getting cold", I said, breaking the silence. He turned to me in anger and shouted. "Keep quiet for a while" and closed his eyes and this time lay back on the sands. I heard him whispering "My God .. My God".

What the hell? "I was beginning to lose my patience.

"Lie back and listen to the sea". Listening to the sea? It was new concept for me. One looks at the sea, watches it in awe, and swims in good beaches. Listening!

It is Music, listen". He advised in a voice sterner and harsher.

Though a cynic, I have known my friend to be a sensitive person in certain fields. Music was one of his strong areas and he had the collection of the best Classics, Oriental and Occidental, in our circle, if he says music, he means it.

I closed my eyes and listened.

It would start as normal sounds of waves "Keep listening" he advised after a minute.

A few more minutes passed by. "Is there not a rhythmic shift similar to our classical raggas? "I was beginning to realise that. Keep focussed".

"Listen now. There would be



a silence and Thaniyavarthana, the repeat rhythms from the drums". My god, true. The inner bowels of the sea were responding in eagerness to the music provided by the waves. There was a simultaneous but sedate support from some unknown string instrument.

I was slowly getting exited. I have spent hours and hours in different Indian beaches. I have tuned myself to listen to the best, and see the best and surrender to the richness of seas and be part of the Universal Music. But this is unique.

"Are you getting it?"

Yes, I said. Watch out, there would be a long silence now. Don't get worried".

I kept my eyes shut and listened. Yes, there suddenly was a deadly silence, it would end soon and the music will start again. Don't open your eyes". I obeyed.

Then started the celebration of waves. I could not resist and opened my eyes. Yes, the waves have started dancing to the tune. My friend sat up and looked at me with a half smile. He was looking at the waves for a long time. How many minutes went by, we had no clue. He walked towards the sea. The sky was brightening up in red colours with tinges of greenish blue. The fishing boats which were resting on the sands were shining in those colours and coconut trees

accepting with bowed heads the new Ragga of the Musician Arabian!.

I walked down the beach and joined my friend. He knelt and kissed the sands as the ripples washed his nose. Suddenly, he cried aloud "Excuse me, excuse me". He was weeping to the Nature for all his bad-mouthing a few hours back. I held him by his shoulder and shed my tears.

"Dinner?" I asked. He turned around and triumphantly pointed towards the sea. "Music was the dinner and it is breakfast time now". Yes, the day was breaking. The deliberate slow motion entry of the Sun had commenced. We threw the dinner pack for the fishes in backwaters and returned home to sleep a day.

Thereafter, I and my friend, together or in separation, have been listening to the music of Arabian in different Kerala beaches, from Kovalam to Bakel Fort. We exchange notes on the shift in sea sounds.

Needless to add, my friend is no longer a cynic of any variety. He has become a very productive professional and has turned into the one of the most travelling domestic tourist. He has huge plans of building Nature-friendly resorts which definitely would named after Music of the Arabian. 1

New development paradigm for Kerala

Kudumbasangamam

Prof. (Dr). K.Ravi
Advisor to Government 'Sustainable Development).'

The State of Kerala is presently undergoing a revolutionary and unprecedented phase in its history of development. The Government for the first time, is initiating effective measures towards achieving, environmentally balanced economic growth. In other words, the Government is determined to lead the State towards sustainable development path. Policies and plans are under way in all sectors of the socio economic systems which will ultimately culminate into integrated sustainable development within the sectoral symbiosis of the state.

The manifestation of development so far took place in Kerala was identified as 'Kerala model of development' in which social development and welfare indicators showed an enhanced status while economic growth (actual value added process) was either stagnant or declining. However, for the last five years or so the social indicators too started declining and the very concept of 'Kerala Model of development' becomes questionable. Increase in unemployment and decline in agricultural and industrial production became the fundamental problems of the Kerala economy and it is under these circumstances, the present Government now adopts development model hither to unattempted .

It is a late, (rather, very late) realization that, because of the very unique environmental resource endowment systems prevailing in the state, Kerala could be

transformed into a perfect model of sustainable development in the world. It is the result of this realization that the present UDF Government is taking initiatives to implement a new Kerala model called Kudumba Sangamam Sustainable Development Program (KSSDP) based on the principles of sustainable development.

Sustainable development

It is a real and unfortunate fact that the exact concept of sustainable development is rather unknown or misunderstood in Kerala where the environmental activists are very vigorous and active compared to any states in India or any region in the world. The environmental activism in Kerala, rather, followed the philosophy and pathway of 'Deep Ecology Ecocentrism', an extreme preservational school of thought dominated by the intuitive acceptance of the notions of intrinsic (as opposed to instrumental) value in nature and rights for all non-human species in the entire ecosystem. Historically it is to be remembered that the present power crisis in the state is directly and indirectly attributed to the 'Deep Ecology Eco-centrism (DEE) practised in Kerala and the collective efforts of environmentalists in creating such a state of affairs. It is also an irony that when Kerala is able to produce power exactly through a sustainable manner, the environmentalists succeeded in stopping invariably all power projects in the state. It is in this context it becomes apparent that the lack of sustainable development education/awareness/literacy among all sections of the

society (politicians, development decision makers, NGOs, environmental activists etc.) is the major cause for above phenomena, and that is why Government is focussing its attention to the sustainable development.

When in Kerala environmental protectionism followed the 'deep ecology ecocentric' approach, most of the rich/developed countries adopted the development path of 'technocentrism', an exploitative school of thought supportive of a growth ethic expressed in material value terms -GNP. This development approach is axiomatic that the market mechanism and technological innovation will ensure infinite substitution possibilities to mitigate long-run resource scarcity. This school of thought practiced by the developed countries, for many decades now, was in fact the historical reason for the total environmental degradation and the subsequent environmental protection/conservation movement evolved throughout the world including 'deep ecology ecocentrism'. It is indeed paradoxical that, this happens. In Kerala where no large scale industrialisation and development took place so far. This Scenario is attributed to the deep routed growth of the 'DEE' movement which consequently prevented the total development potential of the state.

It is under these circumstances that a historical compulsion emerged for evolving alternative development approach/model which will be econo-ecologically symbiotic and compatible for long

term sustainable development (a process in which ecological resource stock of the state could be exploited and utilized in a sustainable manner). As such the concept of sustainable development, if adopted and implemented, will not only mitigate the present unemployment and ecological problems, on one hand, but also conserve the unique eco system of the state for the benefit of the future generations, on the other. Therefore, what the environmentalists (who followed the DEE philosophy) of Kerala have to appreciate is that “sustainable development is a process which helps to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability and opportunity of the future generations to meet their own needs, and thereby maintain the benefits of environment and ecological resource endowment systems.

It is also relevant to mention here that sustainable development does not mean having less economic development; on the contrary, a healthy economy is better able to generate the resources to meet people’s needs, and new investments and environmental improvements often go hand in hand. Nor does it mean that every aspect of the present environment should be preserved at all costs strictly adhering to the principles of DEE. What the sustainable development concept mean is that decisions throughout the society are taken with proper regard to their environmental impact and protection.

KSSDP is a new development concept operationalising the sociological resources of ‘Family Fraternity’. The program envisages each individual family work itself and become an eco-friendly economic production unit on one hand, and all families in a region unite themselves and create a “viable eco-friendly economic

union” (economic fraternity) for achieving comprehensive development and social well being, on the other. One of the novel dimensions of this program is its operationalisation based on local resources, local traditional knowledge, local skill and total econo-ecological sustainability. This helps to generate employment and income at the grass-roots level

families belonging to both below and above poverty line and also at the regional societal level.

In this development process women and unemployed youths are the pivotal participators and beneficiaries. Thereby, it ensures empowerment of women in totality sections. This program also enable and facilitate a symbiotic union and interaction between man (especially

Major objectives

- 1 Provide maximum employment opportunity by “transforming every home into an economic production unit”.
- 1 Develop a local/ region based development process in which economic development and environmental balance goes hand in hand.
- 1 Develop entrepreneurial skill and confidence among people and thereby make them instrumental in the process by initiating their own microenterprises and eco-friendly value added economic activities.
- 1 Empower women and unemployed youth through self-employment initiatives to attain economic stability.
- 1 Create socio-economic opportunity through the KSSDP to avail the chances (especially the demand for eco-friendly products) emerging at the international market attributed to economic globalization process.
- 1 Impart a sustainable development inducing consumption pattern and life style which will help in bringing a total social and behavioural change resulting in environmental benefits and saving potential (capital formation) in Kerala in the long run (also achieving a reduction in life style related diseases)
- 1 Instrumentalising information technology and biotechnology for comprehensive economic development (especially employment and income generation) and positive social change, and thereby extending the benefit of modern technological development to the people.
- 1 Effecting maximum employment generation and comprehensive empowerment of women through promotion of biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources.
- 1 Establishing a ‘Sustainable Development Bank’ as a basic financial support system, including providing savings opportunity for each household economic units.
- 1 Organize an ‘eco-friendly marketing net work, at the state, national and international levels.
- 1 Organize ‘Gulf-returnees Kudumba Sangamam Sustainable Development Units’.

the weaker and disadvantaged segments of the society) and nature (environment).

Inter-Sectoral Development Linkage

The KSSDP visualizes to transform 'every family into an economic production unit' (agricultural and industrial/value addition enabling) to attain economic stability. The economic production process will be completely based on local resources and eco-friendly methods, generating eco-friendly products which are having high national and international demand and market potential. The program will have in it two district production categories, ie, agriculture and industry. The families could get involved in either agricultural or industrial value added initiative or both.

The Kudumba Sangamam concept of development is not only one of the most comprehensive development efforts so far visualised but also has multi-sectoral integration so as to achieve

maximum possible symbiotic interaction benefit from all sectors of the economic systems. When individual sectoral development planning and policy efforts lead to cross-sectoral conflict of interest, KSSDP helps to avoid such a conflict so as to realize sectoral synergetic benefit of development.

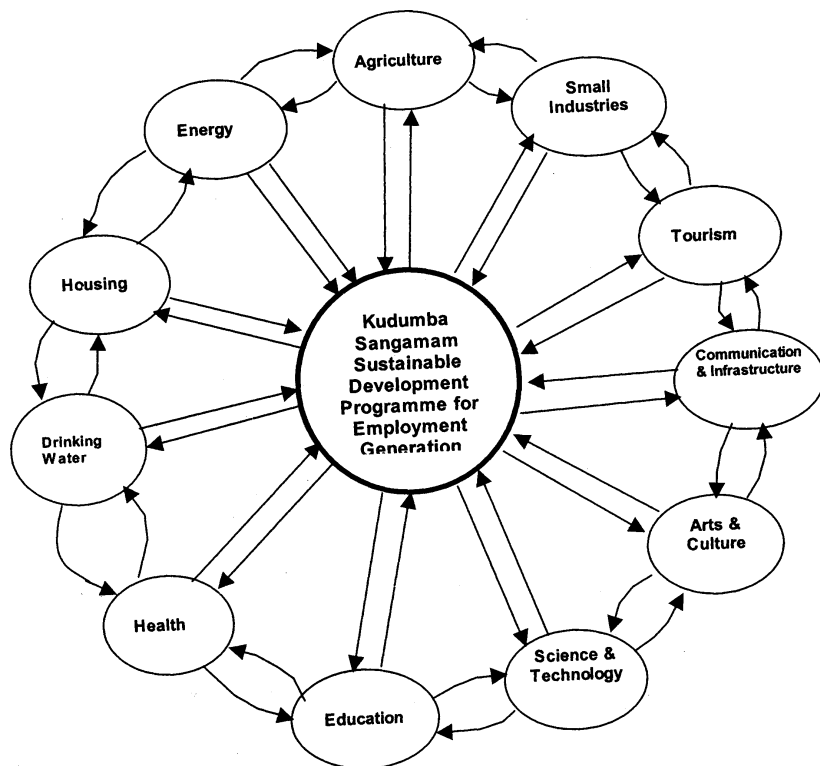
Gulf-Returnees KSSD Units

For the last three decades economic support provided by the Non-Resident Keralites (NRK) to the State was extremely pivotal. In fact, the popular Kerala model of development became a reality because of the uninterrupted remittance and financial base provided by them. In the recent years, however, a significant number of NRKs are returning. It is estimated that more than 20 lakh NRKs have returned and almost 90 per cent of them are unemployed (while 10 per cent are self employed). Further, considerable number of returnees are skilled and semi-skilled in different trades. If adequate and appropriate employment opportunities are

provided, their skill and expertise could be scientifically channelised towards the holistic development of the State. Therefore, as a part of the KSSDP 'Gulf-Returnees Kudumba Sangamam Sustainable Development Units' will be established in each Panchayat. These are basically servicing and value added production centres focusing on construction, services like that of plumber, electrician, A/C mechanic, mason, carpenter, motor mechanic, driver, computer operator etc. The value added programs will encompass production of eco-friendly horticultural and floricultural products, furniture, coconut and rubber based handicrafts and computer assembling/ fabrication etc. The finance for this venture will be in the form of loan/credit from banks and other credit agencies. Implementation of this program will mitigate unemployment among the Gulf returnees significantly.

Operational Organization

As stated earlier, the organization of the KSSDP originates from the grass-roots level house hold. Each house hold becomes an 'Economic Production Unit', the employer and the employee become the same person. The husband, wife, son, daughter all work together in their home. The home transforms itself into a small production centre. The marketing of products will be done by the Kudumba Sangamam Marketing Network. Finance and Technical facilities and expertise are provided by the Kudumba Sangamam Development Centre. A grass roots level Kudumba Sangamam Unit will consist of 25 individual families. Four such grass root level units will form the Local Kudumba Vedi, which is assisted by specialised N.G.O on production techniques, technology,



Ajith Venniyoor

Secretary, Kerala Gandhi Shazak Nidhi

What kind of society did Gandhi want to build up in this world? At this moment when another Gandhi Jayanthi is drawing near, this question comes to our mind again and again with added significance due to the mounting challenges of violence and communal bitterness.

For quite some time, thoughtful people of the world have been greatly disturbed due to worsening situation in all respects in the world. A threatening war cloud having nuclear weapons in its armory is hovering all over the world; people are getting more and more divided into national, religious and ethnic compartments; group conflict and disharmony are developing in every nook and corner. The rapid and intensive industrialization has brought in its wake acute pollution, unemployment and consumerism.

In such a desperate situation the people in the world who are in search of an ideology, a guidance and direction to save the world from this malady, found a direction and ideology to look to Mahatma Gandhi. He was forsaken even by his own countrymen more than fifty years ago as a conservative, backward and retrograde person irrelevant to a rapidly industrializing and modernizing world. Now Gandhi is becoming more and more relevant in the modern day world to offer a multi purpose solution to the world problems.

The Mahatma diagnosed the ills of our times and gave proper sense of direction to our thought and action.

He fought ceaselessly against these basic social sins and shaped the texture of unique revolution in history based on truth and non-violence.

Gandhi took a holistic view of life and did not divide in to separate compartments. For him, politics, religion, moral life and economic activities are inseparably

Gandhi Relevance in modern world

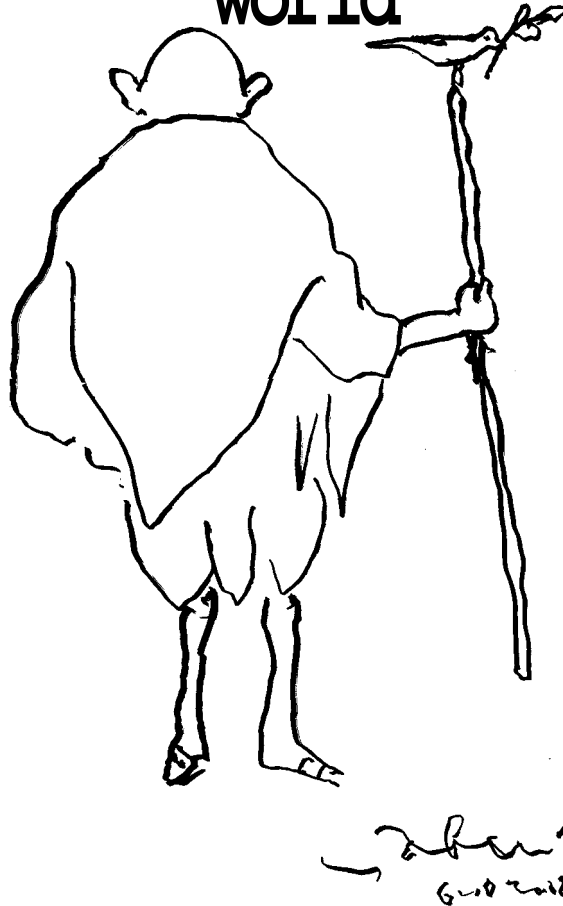


Illustration by Mr. Abu Abraham on 6 th October, 2002

interwoven. He tried to put into practice, through his own work, that entire he found good and relevant in the effort and preaching of previous religious, moral and social reforms. Although a nationalist par excellence, he was also, in the true sense of the term, a Universalist.

Gandhi believed in conjunctive thinking which led him to conviction that it is counter productive to destroy the previous structure in order to build a new edifice. He believed in introducing changes step by step, bringing new elements in an old structure of thought and practices so that the

people did not feel uprooted from the past all of a sudden. He believed in giving power to the people in the real sense of the term both in the field of politics and economics. He advocated maximum autonomy to village councils in matter of administration and self-reliance, and also self sufficiency in industry, agriculture and the total economy.

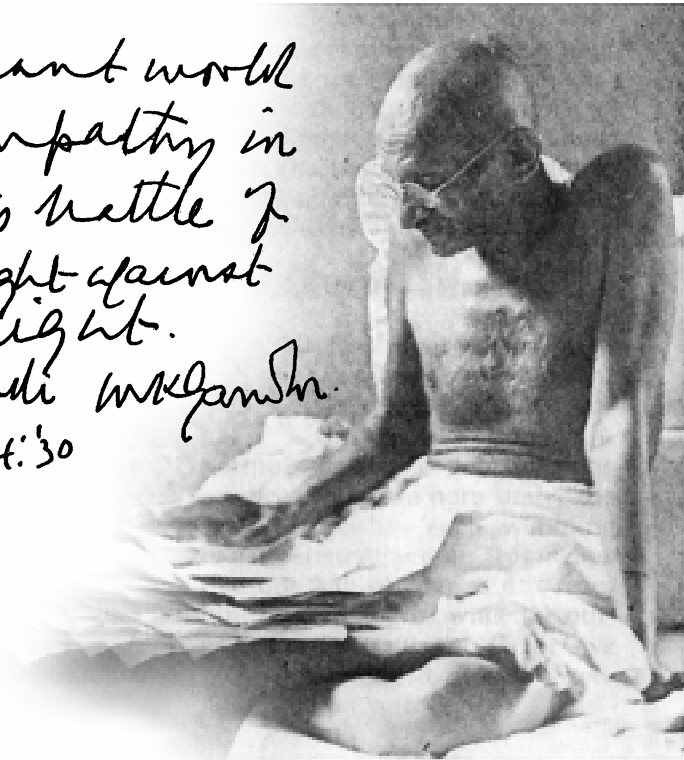
Mahatma Gandhi, more than anybody else, represented the urges of twentieth century and shaped those urges towards reconstruction of man and society. He led the people of that century to liberation

and gave them the vision and technique of a new society based on truth and non-violence. Gandhi's approach to peace was many-sided, and it contained all the aspects of the problem- social, legal, political, economic, cultural, educational, religious and spiritual. He challenged all those conditions which destroyed peace in life. He wanted to establish peace between man and man, group and group and nation and nation. For this he evolved peaceful techniques of action which will go to the root of the trouble; isolate evil from the evil-doer and fight evil with peaceful weapons of the spirit. "I believe all war to be wholly wrong", Gandhi has said categorically. "What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or democracy?" Here indeed is not merely the voice of Gandhi but the voice of humanity craving for peace amidst a world stricken with madness of violence.

Gandhiji gave a new orientation to political and economic thinking of present and coming centuries. He integrated politics with ethnical and spiritual values the political and economic conflicts have to be resolved through non-violence. Gandhi developed the weapon of Satyagraha to build up a truly democratic political life. Satyagraha is the only practical weapon which can be wielded even by the physically weakest society. He gave us a social science based on decentralisation of power and wealth. He wanted science and spirituality to be integrated at all levels of life. He wanted people to lead a life of truth and love. By his philosophy of action he has become the greatest prophet of the twenty-first century.

Gandhi wanted every man to realize the strength of the spirit in him. Every man carried with him the divine spark and we should recognize this spark and never

*I want world
sympathy in
this battle of
Right against
Wrong.
Gandhi MK Gandhi.
5.4.30*



allow it to be extinguished by untruth and injustice in society to build up social life. Politics has to be based on spirit of man and has to be a vehicle of service and not domination.

Religion according to Gandhi meant an inner awakening. In this awakening which made Gandhi fight the crudities of religion like untouchability, animal sacrifice and other meaningless institutions that had become part and parcel of religious practice. It is this awakening which made Gandhi see the truth in every religion and proclaim his ideal of "Sarva Dharma Samanatham"

Religion according to Gandhi meant acceptance of God and acceptance of God meant to allow love, truth and reason to rule the heart and remove selfishness, ill-will, ignorance, unreason and all the passions like anger, greed and lust that follow there from. Therefore, for him the essence of religion lay in morality.

For Gandhi, peace was paramount and indivisible. He did not even care for freedom if it had to be wrested by violent means. He

did not think any freedom to be worth keeping which had to be kept at the point of bayonet.

No country seems to have been left untouched by the phenomenon of violence. The sheer vastness of India as a nation serves to attract mercenaries and terrorists of all hues from within and without. Though the roots of violence in contemporary society lie in certain structural changes, it is a widely accepted fact that whatever be the face of today's violence, at the bottom it remains a pathological phenomenon whose existence can best be understood in terms of its inner dynamics and larger concerns.

Gandhi simultaneously with his political and economic programs gave us a system of education which would train us in the science of man-making and social reconstruction. Gandhi's system of education covered pre-basic education for children, basic education for girls and boys, post-basic education for adolescents, rural university education for the



On to a world without leprosy

Dr. Mary S. Joseph

The word 'Leprosy' was once associated with fear, disgust and stigma. But now the situation has changed. Now, detailed knowledge about the disease is available. People have started to consider this disease as any other disease. Still one cannot say that cent per cent people have changed their attitude.

Leprosy is not a hereditary disease but the chance or tendency to contract the disease is determined by heredity. That is, children of leprosy parents have genetic chance to get leprosy if they have prolonged and close contact with open cases (patients who have leprosy germs in their body). If only close contact is sufficient to get the disease, by now many leprosy workers all over the world would have developed leprosy.

Leprosy is not a venereal disease or curse from God, but a disease caused by germs as many other diseases. The bacterium which causes leprosy is called *Mycobacterium leprae* or the *leprosy bacillus* which belongs to the same family as the *tuberculosis bacillus*. It was discovered by a Norwegian Scientist Hansen in 1873 and so

leprosy is also called Hansen's Disease (H.D). It has a very long incubation period of three to five years or longer and it takes at least three years for the disease symptoms to develop after the germs enter the body. The disease affects mainly the skin and sometimes the peripheral nerves.

Though there are many types of leprosy, broadly it can be classified into two, (a) the contagious or infectious type and (b) the non-contagious type. The contagious type will have germs in the body and so is capable of spreading the disease to others whereas non-contagious type is relatively mild and is not dangerous. The disease spreads to others through skin contact and through droplets like tuberculosis. The bacteria from nose and throat of open cases are spread into the air while coughing, sneezing and talking and can affect those individuals who are genetically susceptible. One does not get the disease by sitting next to or touching a patient. Prolonged close contact with open cases and genetic chance are necessary to get the disease. The leprosy beggars whom we see often are usually harmless as they do not have the germs in them. They

are worn out cases and their deformities and ulcers are due to neglect in taking care of the limbs, which have numbness. The same problem can happen in patients with diabetes and other diseases, which affect the peripheral nerves.

With the advent of modern drugs, leprosy is completely curable and complications are preventable. Deformities which have already occurred can be corrected surgically.

In the 1950s treatment of leprosy was limited to Chaulmoogra oil (oil from the dry fruit of a tree) and Dapsone tablets. But now a combination of very effective drugs namely, Dapsone, Rifampicin and Clofazimine in the name Multi Drug Therapy (MDT) is being used. This was introduced by the World Health Organisation more than 20 years ago. Though the drugs are costly they are given free of charge by government and private agencies. Earlier Dapsone was to be given for lifelong, but MDT needs to be taken at the most for 24 months. For milder and non contagious types the duration of treatment is only 6 months.

Today leprosy is no more a serious global problem. As a result of combined efforts by WHO, local governments and voluntary agencies 90 per cent of the disease is under control. Presently only in 12 countries including India, leprosy continue to be a significant health problem. Of world's total leprosy patients 70 per cent are in India. In the 1950s the number of patients per 10000 population was 57 but today the number is less than 5 per 10000. In 1986 total number of patients in India was 3.4 million whereas in 2001 this is reduced to 0.4 million. Vigorous national leprosy control programs with the support of over 280 national and over eight international NGOs along with WHO's MDT are behind this achievements.

In India leprosy has been eliminated either partially or completely

from 21 States and Union territories. Now the majority of cases are in six states namely, Uttar Pradesh West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand and Chattisgarh. In South India the disease is well under control. In the northeastern and northwestern parts of the country and in Kerala the number of leprosy affected people is the lowest. The contagious type of leprosy is almost absent now.

The main signs of leprosy are:-

1. Skin patches with discolouration
2. Numbness or impaired sensory feeling
3. Thickened peripheral nerves
4. Presence of leprosy bacilli as seen under microscope in the scrapings from nose or skin.

If any two of the first three signs are present or if the fourth sign alone is present one can diagnose leprosy. The most important and easiest test to diagnose leprosy is skin smear examination under special stain for acid fast bacilli. For further confirmation a skin or nerve biopsy will help.

The attitude towards leprosy is not same in all parts of the world. In our state the people still keep leprosy patients at a distance. If a beggar has deformities of limbs or ulcers, people hesitate even to give alms, fearing that they might get leprosy from him. The reason is



lack of proper knowledge about the disease. In 1978 when I decided to join leprosy work my father asked me "Did you not get any other job?" Another member of my family who was a teacher and who claimed to know all about leprosy as she had to teach leprosy in the primary school also tried to dissuade me but when failed, she sent me with the 'blessing that one day I too will get leprosy. But I did not contract the disease even after more than 10 years of continuous leprosy work. In those days the knowledge about leprosy was limited to a single chapter in the primary class text book but today the knowledge of leprosy is too vast as a result of extensive studies and researches in the field. In the area of treatment also there has been tremendous advances.

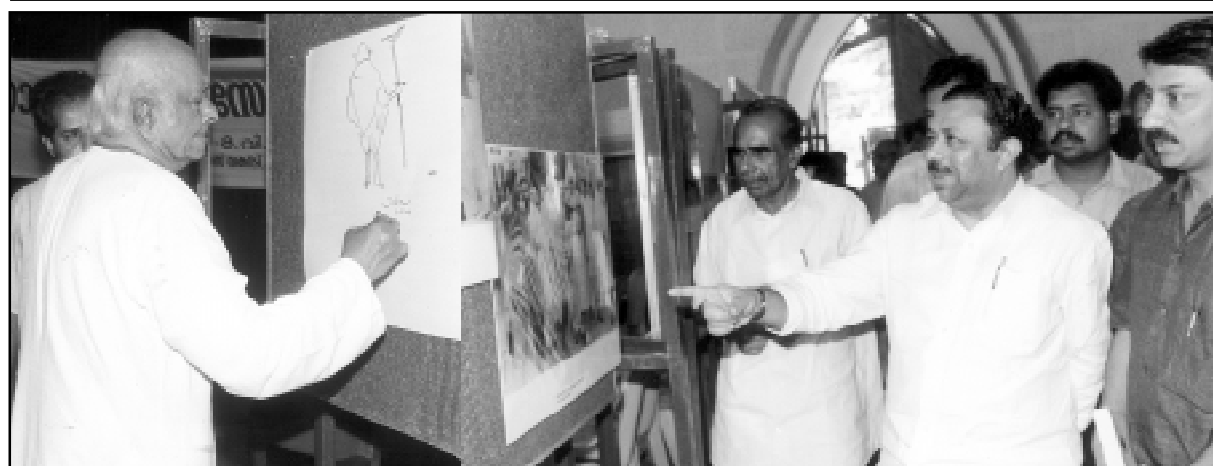
The attitude of Keralaites towards leprosy is still to change. Leprosy should be considered as

any other skin disease or even with less disgust and stigma than some other skin diseases which cause lifelong suffering and nuisance. It is relatively a better skin disease because it is completely curable and if treated adequately in time its complications are preventable. All what one has to do if there is a numb patch or an area of numbness on any part of the body is to consult a skin doctor and follow his advise. In mild cases just 6 months treatment is all what is required.

Let us not turn away our face from a leprosy beggar who stretches out his deformed hand to us for alms. He is not a dangerous patient as he is unlikely to pass on the disease to us. Let us not call him a 'leper' but let us call him a 'leprosy patient'. Like Fr. Damien, Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Teresa we can also accept and love the persons affected by this disease. By co-operating with the National Leprosy Control Program and by acknowledging the efforts and achievements of WHO and the various Voluntary Organisations, let us march forward on to a world without leprosy.

The author formerly a consultant Leprologist to the Government of Thailand and International Organisations.

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grown-up students and adult education for worker and peasants. His concept of education is remarkably consistent with progressive and modern theories of education developed by the revolutionary educationists in different parts of the world. The educational revolution of Gandhi can not be isolated from his political and economic revolution. With out the educational revolution, there is no possibility of success for the political and economic programmes.

Gandhiji has touched all dimensions of human development. He has given a vision and a programme for individual and social reconstruction. Understanding of Gandhi in terms of modern problems is very necessary if we are to be on right track in dealing with problems of world reconstruction. He insisted on the relationship between ends and means in revolution. He insisted on the purity of means in revolution which is bold departure in the revolutionary techniques of the time. He rejected violence, conspiracy and other concomitant aspects of violent revolution and evolved the technology of non-violence and organisation of pure means to achieve revolution.

In Gandhi, no doubt, action dominated and this gave a unique reality and sense of urgency to his thinking and feelings. If Gandhi were merely a thinker, he would not have succeeded in moving millions in history as he has done. He synthesized in a powerful way his thought, action, and feeling and made it an irresistible force for creating revolutionary changes in the world.

Gandhi was a fundamental thinker of our age. He went to the roots of every problem. He applied the test of reason to every problem. He was the greatest advocate of reason and wanted to examine even religion with reason. It is only when reason failed that he embraced faith. For him reason and faith were not opposed to each other but they complemented each

other in the discovery of truth.. He never allowed any superstition or irrationality to cloud his process of reasoning in affairs where it applied.

Gandhi had the infinite courage to go against the routine inert ideas and to chalk out a new path in light of reason. He advocated his cause with marvelous clarity and brilliance He placed his thoughts regularly before the people through weekly journals and patiently built up the creative thought structure needed for a revolution.

Gandhi's ideas assumed dynamic strength because he was ready to put his dynamic thoughts into practice. Many a time he acted first and then gave reason for his action. As soon as a thought seized hold of him he was ready to act and prepared to face all consequences. The Ashrams that he established were the living laboratories for testing his thoughts and finding out their pragmatic significance.

Gandhi had a passion for experimentation in life. He had a true scientific mind which tested everything before accepting it. He experimented with the nonviolent technique in individual and group discipline in his Ashrams. He experimented with agriculture, food, clothing, compost making, village industries, education and innumerable aspects of life. He had scientific ideas about these things. He synthesized thought, emotion, and will and directed all activities into a process of development.

All his thoughts were based on the springs of truth and nonviolence. Gandhi's creative thought based on truth and non violence challenged the untruth and violence prevailing in society. He brought the impact of truth and on every aspect of life and helped to form a new view of life. In this age of globalization the frequent confrontation and violent eruptions between different cultures and different religions only suggests that while the world has become a physical unity it is yet to become

an integrated unity.

Gandhi's essence also lay in ceaseless striving against injustice, oppression and exploitation. His major struggle started against apartheid and colour discrimination in South Africa. From that onwards, he carried out struggle after struggle against all types of political, economic and social evils and exploitation up to the last day of his life..

Gandhi advocated a life style which emphasized simplicity, avoidance of ostentation, conspicuous consumption, greed or lust for power, position and fame. He ate simple healthy food, more simple clean clothes and lived in simple a clean huts which he kept tidy himself. He advocated manual and physical work for every human being which led to his insistence on self-reliance and self-sufficiency in as small unit as possible.

The life style Gandhi practiced for him self and prescribed for others rendered war, armament, huge industries and multi-nationals completely redundant. He envisaged a society where a people all over the world lived a life of limited wants and essential needs, produced most of their daily requirements by using simple easily manageable and easily accessible (appropriate) technology. He favoured all sorts of machines, if they did not dominate man and instead served to lighten his drudgery and improve quality.

Gandhi has a message for the whole of the world in its desperate situation which threatens to blow up the world from many directions. In this age of market economy, we have lost our synoptic vision of life and integrated approach to life and its problems. His philosophy is a guide to action and can be developed only when the common people liberate themselves from the shackles of tyranny. The real understanding and the solution of the twenty-first century problems can come only through Gandhian analysis and synthesis.

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Honorable Governor Sikkandar Bakth releases TB Stamp at Raj Bhavan. Health Minister Mr.P. Sankaran is also seen.

ST on coffee slashed

In a move to ensure better prices to the farmers for their agriculture produces, the Kerala Government have slashed sales tax on coffee from eight to four per cent., Further, tax at the point of purchase of ginger, green or dried has been completely withdrawn.

The Government have decided to exempt registered dealers other than dealers in ready mix concrete, live chicken and meat furnace oil Low Sulphur Heavy stock and other ends of crude oil distillation and petroleum products other than

liquified petroleum gas imported by dealers other than central or state government departments or public sector undertakings paying sales tax under the kerala Government Sales Tax Act 1963.

The industrial units in the special economic zone in Kochi have been exempted from entry tax on goods imported by them. The turn over tax on Indian made foreign liquor through canteen stores has been reduced to 55 from 70 per cent.

SSLC, HSS exams simultaneously

The SSLC and Higher Secondary School examinations 2002-03 will be held simultaneously. This was decided in the meeting of officers in the General Education Department convened by the Minis-

ter for Education Mr.Nalakath Sooppy. As per the decision, both exams will commence on 12th March. The HSS exams will be over on 27th and SSLC exams on 28th March 2003.



Chief Minister Mr.A.K. Antony inaugurates the Gandhi Jayanti Week celebrations. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mr.M.M. Hassan, Education Minister Nalakath Sooppy, Rural Development Minister Mr.C.F. Thomas and Sivakumar MP are also seen.

Online lottery: committee constituted

The Government of Kerala have constituted a Secretary level committee to prepare a detailed report for commencing Online Lottery (OLL) in the state.

The committee, headed by the Finance Secretary includes Secretaries of Finance (Expenditure), Information Technology, Industries departments, with Taxes Secretary as Convenor.

Either an agency or licensee, who is technically and financially sound, will be entrusted with OLL. The committee will look into the various aspects regarding the constitute of the OLL, including auction proceedings, selection criteria, rules and regulations, control over hardware and software security in transactions and prize distribution.

Rs.81 crore scheme for aquaculture in paddy fields

A scheme for aquaculture in the paddy fields during off season will be implemented through state's Aquaculture Development Agency (Adak). It is being carried out in 4000 Hectors spreading over Thrissur, Malappuram, Ernakulam, Alappuzha and Kottayam districts. Total investment is Rs.80.82 crores including state governments, share of Rs.21.38 crores. Balance amount will be gathered from beneficiaries and financial institutions.

It is expected to produce 3000 tons of prawns and 16,000 tons of carps worth Rs.86.6 crores.



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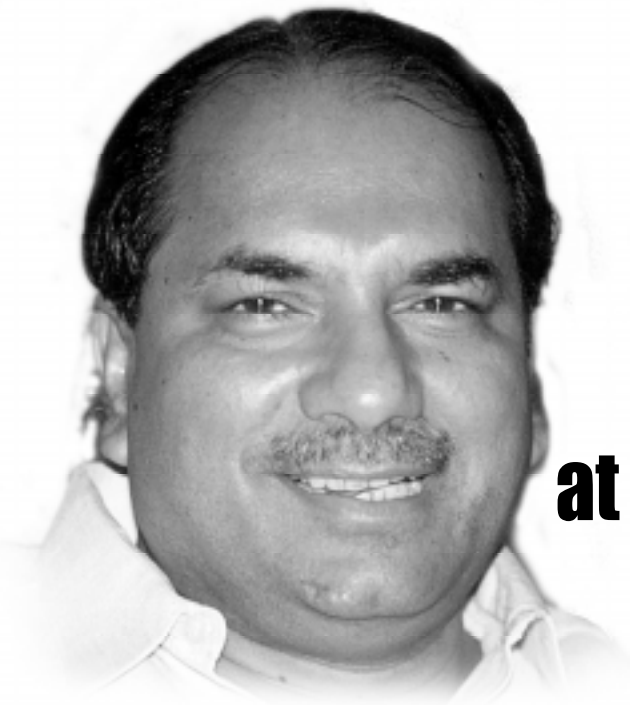
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Citizens grievances

Govt. aiming at speedy redressal

A.K. Antony
Chief Minister of Kerala

Chief Minister Mr. A.K. Antony assured that Kerala Government is continuously endeavouring to impress up on the state police as well as all departments to pay particular attention to the redressal of citizens grievances in speedy and humane manner. He was inaugurating the workshop on 'Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' at Mascot Hotel, Thiruvananthapuram on 30th September 2002 for Senior Officers of the State Government, the full text of his speech is given below.

At the outset, let me welcome Hon' Justice J.S.Verma, Chairman, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to Kerala and wish him a very pleasant stay in the State. I hope that Hon. Justice J.S.Verma would find some time from his busy schedule to enjoy the scenic beauty and back waters for which Kerala is famous the world over. The Government are extremely happy that NHRC has taken the initiative for holding such a workshop in Kerala. This is the first time that IMG has undertaken

training in the field of Human Rights.

NHRC have in their last nine years built up an enviable record in the field of human rights. The reports of the NHRC bear ample testimony to the importance of human rights and the vigorous steps it has taken to protect the citizens of this country. NHRC through its various intervention and recommendations has become an institution which all Indians are proud of. It has achieved international recognition in the field of Human Rights.

At this particular conference 22 IAS officers, 5 IPS officers and 5 police officers of the rank of SP in the State Cadre are participating. Normally the focus has been on civil and political rights. However much remains to be done in the field of economic, social and cultural rights. This is one reason that the State Government was very prompt in supporting such a workshop with this theme. Within this broad thematic area, seven important themes have been selected which are detailed in the agenda. The resource personnel are all people of eminence, with deep

knowledge of human rights. They include a senior officer of the UNICEF as well as two persons from the voluntary sector.

Part III and IV of the Constitution of India, which have been described as the heart and soul of the Constitution, contains the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. This incorporates the major provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As you are aware, the human rights relating to economic, social and cultural matters mainly involve the right to food, work, education, health and social security. The UN Human Development Report for the year 2000 states and I quote "Every society has known racism, sexism, authoritarianism, xenophobia-depriving men and women of their dignity and freedom. The struggle continues today in all countries, rich and poor".

Recently over hundred Nobel Prize winners declared in a joint statement issued in Stockholm, that future challenge to world peace would stem from the legitimate demands of the world's poor and disenfranchised majority.

The empowerment of women is a major theme of the NHRC. In Kerala we are particularly proud of the position of our women. The sex ratio in Kerala favours women. In almost any profession, the women of Kerala have carved out a position of pride. At the same time the State Government is aware of the need for continuous vigilance to ensure that the dignity of women is safeguarded. In pursuance of the landmark Supreme Court judgment concerning setting up of complaint mechanisms to deal with sexual harassment of women, Government have ordered the setting up of appropriate cells in every departments. The IMG has designed a course to train the members of such cells in their duties. During this year 11 such courses, each covering 30 participants, will be conducted. This will cover practically all the departments in the State.

The State is facing a major challenge today. We are in the process of effecting major reforms in all spheres of activity with a view to liberate the full potential of the people of the State. The world is becoming a Global Village and Keralites have for centuries been moving out and expanding their horizons and opportunities. At this juncture, it is very essential that economic, social and cultural rights of the people are protected. People of the State have to be made aware of the challenges that face them. State need to change so as to wel-

come private initiative especially in the building of modern infrastructure. The Government which is slowly attempting to improve its financial position is deeply conscious of the need to protect vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the society. I would like to assure Hon. Chairman of the NHRC that we in Kerala are extremely conscious, on account of high literacy levels, about our human rights. The State Police have in their training courses, regular modules on human rights and ways to effectively handle the citizens' problems. The State Government are continuously endeavouring to im-

press upon the State Police as well as all Departments to pay particular attention to the redressal of citizens' grievances in a speedy and humane manner.

I hope that senior officers of the State Government who are present would seriously participate in the workshop and take the message back to their various departments and offices and ensure that these are widely disseminated. I am hopeful that this workshop would be the first of a series of such workshop so that the message of Economics, Social and Cultural rights could be disseminated widely among the people of the State.



Chief Minister Mr.A.K. Antony visits Honorable President Mr.APJ Abdul Kalam at Rashtrapathy Bhavan in New Delhi.

finance and marketing. The technology support for these sustainable development units will be provided by the District Level Sustainable Development Growth Centres. The growth centres will have a comprehensive facility providing system which supervises technology provision and production techniques, storage and distribution of raw material to each Kudumba Vedi (and through

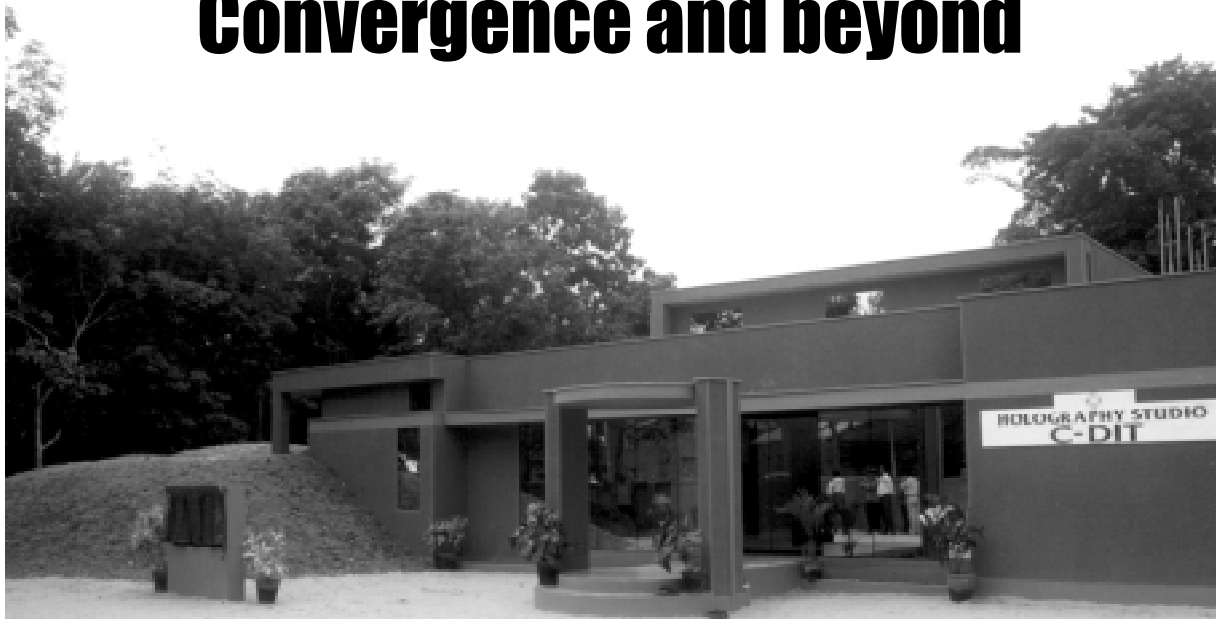
which to each home units), marketing of the produce and total entrepreneurial and sustainable development life style awareness.

Another novel aspect of the KSSDP is that the major part of its expenditure is met through national and international financial institutions as there exists good potential to get funding, for the promotion of sustainable development programs. The government is basically a facilitator

and catalyst, not a continuous fund provider in the long run. The proposed KSSD Centres will play a guiding, service providing role. Thus, the KSSDP is a unique and comprehensive development initiative, for the first time in India, aiming at providing employment and income generating opportunities for unemployed people belonging to both below and above poverty line through econo-ecologically-sustainable methods of development. 1

C-Dit

Convergence and beyond



**Dr. Achuthsankar
S. Nair**

Director, C-Dit

While inaugurating the diversification and development activity of the Centre for Development of Imaging Technology (C-Dit), Chief Minister of Kerala, Mr. A.K. Antony remarked, "Future belongs to organisation like C-Dit, which are quick in adapting to the changes ushered in by the technological advancement". In fact the Chief Minister was pointing to the core virtue of C-Dit as a modern scientific and research institution. Since its inception, it has been taking up projects in the frontier areas of technology and today in a much more radiant way. Its range of activities is really amazing. From Video communication, animation, multimedia to software development, IT enabled services and the recent achievement of holography. Looked from an entrepreneurial perspective, it covers broad areas of entertainment, education, services and hard-core industrial research. In addition to all this, C-Dit can aptly be called as the first convergent

institution in Kerala, perhaps in India as well.

Convergence, in Media and IT parlance means, the fusion of the text, video, audio with internet as the platform and in technological terms, it all began with the shift from analog to digital media. Let us look at the areas of C-Dit. It is known not even nationally but internationally for the quality video programs. In multimedia and animation, C-dit has already proved its mettle with the production of multimedia, C-Dit has already proved its mettle with the production of multimedia CD and animation films. The web hosting services of C-Dit are forerunner in the industry of Kerala. With the major project of FRIENDS JANASEVANA KENDRAM. Its capability in the area of IT enabled services have been established. All these activities converge under one-roof of C-Dit. But then this will be too limiting the major other efforts. The new Holography project has a tremendous achievement in the symbiotic relation between research and industry. But then again we are missing some of the other major

recent achievements. The digital subtitling technology developed by C-Dit has already gained tremendous popularity at global level. We are planning to patent this technology very soon. At another level, C-Dit is a pioneer in the area of communication training. The variety of speciality courses offered by C-dit in the area of ICT has already received paramount interest among the students community, both Kerala and national level. This would surmise to state that C-Dit is convergence and beyond.

Video Communication

Right from the scratch, Video communication (VCG) was one of the core areas of C-dit. VCG has a highly qualified and well-knit team of producers, camera persons, and editors. It has modern digital and analog video equipments for shooting, editing, and sound recording. We produce video programs for NCSTC, STEC, PRD and several other central and state government institutions. DD-Gyan Darshan and Malayalam satellite channels have broadcast our programs.

More than 300 video programs have been produced at the centre so far, covering a wide spectrum of topics like development and environment, health, education and science communication. It has produced the popular science video program "Sastrakauthukam" broadcast every month by D o o r d a r s h a n , Thiruvananthapuram. C-Dit's "Padhanakauthukam" has been widely appreciated for its role as an educational technology aid and by teachers and students. "Manavodayam"- a 26 part video series on the evolution of humankind and society produced for NCSTC is nearing completion. Besides this, C-Dit has a video archives, which has rare and marvellous collection of video materials on Kerala and in the area of education and science as well.

Multimedia

The interactive CD-Rom titled "Green Citadel" produced for Forests Department of Kerala has been widely acclaimed by the media. The CD is comprehensive guide to the diversity of forests in Kerala. It also has rare footages of different species inhabiting the forests area of Kerala. The product will hit the markets very soon.

C-Dit is in the process of producing an interactive CD on IT literacy for IT mission and interactive e-learning CD's for school students on a variety of topics.

Animation

"Of Fishes and Tales" produced by C-Dit for State Institute for children's Literature has received widely

as an entertainment film and educative one. It narrates on fisher folk and ecological issues faced through the depletion of river

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resources. The film has used most of the major techniques-2D and 3D animation, cell animation, cut-out animation, claymation etc.

The animation division has also produced several spot animation films intended to create awareness among people on host of several important issues. The education materials produced by the animation division are par-excellence.

Educational Informatics

This is one of the new divisions of C-Dit. As a new area, the term needs little explanation. For instance, a teacher in a regular class room explains to students the simple pendulum motion with help of chalk and a board. But the whole illustration does not provide the students a feel of the whole. But let us illustrate the same with in a virtual situation. The same can be displayed virtually and not only that students can interact with the same experiment by giving different values. For example, how will it be when we have a negative gravity? So far this has been restricted to the realm of thought experiment. To feel it one has to have it virtually. This is practitionable with computer software. The software is known

as appalets. This gives a v a l u e addition to e-learning. The new term coined for this is educational informatics.

Holography

The first public sector holography studio in the country was inaugurated recently in the C-Dit. The newly



constructed building will house holographic studio, mastering laboratory and the security hologram facility. The Kerala State Beverages Corporation has funded the construction.

As the first holographic studio under public sector, C-Dit will be able to play a leading role in the future of holographic imaging in the country. The optical image processing division has already met the security hologram requirement of the University of Kerala.

In the mean time, C-Dit is also pursuing the possibilities of using hologram as a creative medium. As part of this, optical image processing division is planning to train artists and creative designers in the artwork preparation for holography and also to extend the upcoming studio facility for hologram shooting.

C-Dit envisages this as a revenue-generating source with a client friendly atmosphere delivering cost effective holographic solutions.

Web hosting

Recently, inaugurated the online press release system of the PRD perfected and maintained jointly by C-Dit and PRD. This is part of the complete and comprehensive website on Kerala hosted by C-dit for PRD. The project in its entirety is a major communication network interconnecting all the PRD offices through the internet Both C-Dit and PRD has conceived online press release system as part of e-governance network of the state. The projects is determined to bring in efficiency and transparency of the governmental information system. The C- Dit **is also maintaining the official web portal of the Government of Kerala** has hosted a number of websites for government as well as other public sector undertakings. Remarkable among them is the model website hosted for Kerala University. There is a plethora of

information available on the various courses and services provided by the University. The popularity of the site is evident from the 10-fold increase in hits to the site during last months. Faculty members today have web pages with publications, recommended books and websites on dispels. The old question papers are downloadable so are the application forms.

Friends and IT enabled Services

FRIENDS (Fast, Reliable, Instant, Network for Disbursement of services) is a unique IT project taken up by the Government of Kerala to take benefits of information technology to the common man. It is a "single window scheme" in which the consumer is given the option of paying for the common services rendered to aim under a single roof. The major aspect of this concept is to treat citizens who are paying for the services rendered to him as a valued customer who must be given all the respect that he richly desired. The FRIENDS project has been implemented by the Information. Technology Department Services Society (KITTS) in collaboration with various departments like the Kerala State Electricity Board, Kerala Water Authority, Revenue Department, Civil Supplies Department, Motor Vehicles Department, Universities, the Local bodies, and the BSNL. The entire technical support of systems administration, and maintenance service is provided by C Dit.

Digital subtitling

In the recently concluded International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK), C-Dit won laurel for developing a new technology for subtitling the film . This digital technology is first in the world and this is the most cost-effective way of subtitling film prints. The new technology developed is a mixture of the feature of traditional projection technique with the new

software technology. This enables subtitling a film without touching the print. C- Dit is in the process patenting this innovative product in under process.

Linguistic computing

This is the youngest of the division started in C-Dit. The major areas of activity is to develop Malayalam fonts for computing. C-Dit jointly with ER & DC have come up with a Malayalam software font package called, AKSHARA- MALA. The fonts developed are of use for print media as well as for titling. The fonts created are artistic and user-friendly typographical software package for internet uses.

Training

C-Dit is a pioneer in the field of communication training. The significance of the C-Dit courses it keeps the qualitative difference from the other run-of-the mill courses available through different institutions. Its courses are speciality programs. The different programs offered at C-Dit are Post Graduate Diploma in Science and Development Communication, Educational Informatics, Multimedia, Animation Film, Cyber Journalism and a short-term course in Digital Photography. Besides this, C-Dit regularly conducts visual media training programs for outside agencies and institutions like Kerala Press Academy.

What has been mentioned would only a profile of what C-Dit is. Because C-Dit is much more than what you can gather at first sight. There are many other avenues opened by C-Dit, which has not been referred in this paper, like the new area of Bio- informatics. All said and done, we firmly believe that it is the technically skilled professionals and other staff working at C-Dit who are at the core of its achievements.

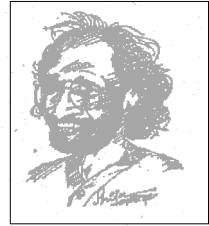
(Prepared in collaboration with Mr.Damodar Prasad, Team Leader, PR and Marketing C-Dit).



Mavelikkara Ramachandran

A cartoon depicting with humour and subtle ironies of everyday life is in a way a satire in lines aiming to change, elevate and educate the society. It serves as a corrective agent and powerful weapon purifying our socio-political arena of its many ills by directly appealing to our finer sentiments and aesthetic sensibility. In India for that matter in any other developing country, political cartoons get much importance than the cartoons that deal with social happenings. It is not that we are very much politically conscious but being a developing nation, we are addicted to it by force of circumstances and compulsion. We generally do not differentiate between caricature which is an intelligent symbol of sarcasm and an illustration which serves as an effective means of communication. A cartoon transcends the boundaries of region, language and time and in this sense Shankar is a classic example.

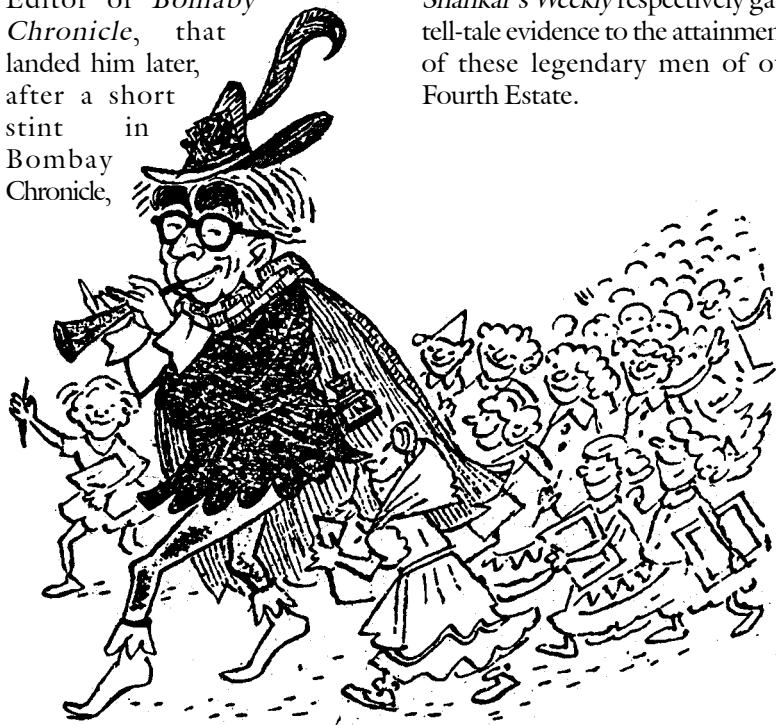
Cartoonist Shankar was a highpriest of humour who established a name in the field of Caricature drawing. It was with Shankar that political Cartooning in Journalism made a rigorous beginning in India.



Shankar the doyen of indian cartooning

Illikulathu Sankara Pillai, popularly known as Shankar, was born to Sri.Narayana Pillai and Smt.Kochukunjamma on July 31, 1902 in a middle class family at Kayamkulam in Alappuzha District. After graduating from the Maharaja's College, Thiruvananthapuram in 1927, he proceeded to Mumbai and got employed in a Shipping Company. It was his chance meeting with the veteran journalist Pothen Joseph, the Editor of *Bombay Chronicle*, that landed him later, after a short stint in Bombay Chronicle,

in the office of *Hindustan Times*, Delhi, as a Staff Cartoonist after Pothen Joseph moved to Delhi and took over the Editorship of the paper. After leaving *Hindustan Times*, Shankar launched *Shankar's weekly* in May 1948. Delhi soon became the confluence of a rare cameraderie among Chalapathi Rao, Edathatta Narayanan and Cartoonist Shankar, the reputed trio of the newspaper media. The *National Herald*, *Patriot* and the *Shankar's Weekly* respectively gave tell-tale evidence to the attainments of these legendary men of our Fourth Estate.



Shankar attributes his sense of humour to the faculty he developed during his childhood days through his observation of the traits and habits of a certain nomadic tribe called *Parangodanmar* who used to frequent his native village. Certainly the influence of Kathakali, Chakkyarkoothu and Thullal is inescapable to any Keralite and Shankar was no exception. Those who had the opportunity to see Shankar at work in his studio would tell us that he was a quick artist who would compound the reality of the moment and transplant the images on paper with professional precision. At that point of time the Cartoonist and the Cartoon, the creator and the creation become one, leaving a everlasting memory.

Shankar was among the very few Indians who enjoyed plentiful patronage from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Not a single issue of Shankar's weekly appeared without a couple of caricatures of Panditji. It is known to all that when Nehru released the first issue of Shankar's weekly, he requested Shankar "Don't spare me Shankar. Hit, hit me hard". Monarchs, Viceroy, Presidents, Prime Ministers and such other majesties felt honoured when Shankar caricatured them in his pen portrait, "Man of the Week". Lord Mountbatten, V.K. Krishna Menon, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Morarji Desai and several stalwarts of the Indian political scene were not spared from the sarcasm of his strokes.

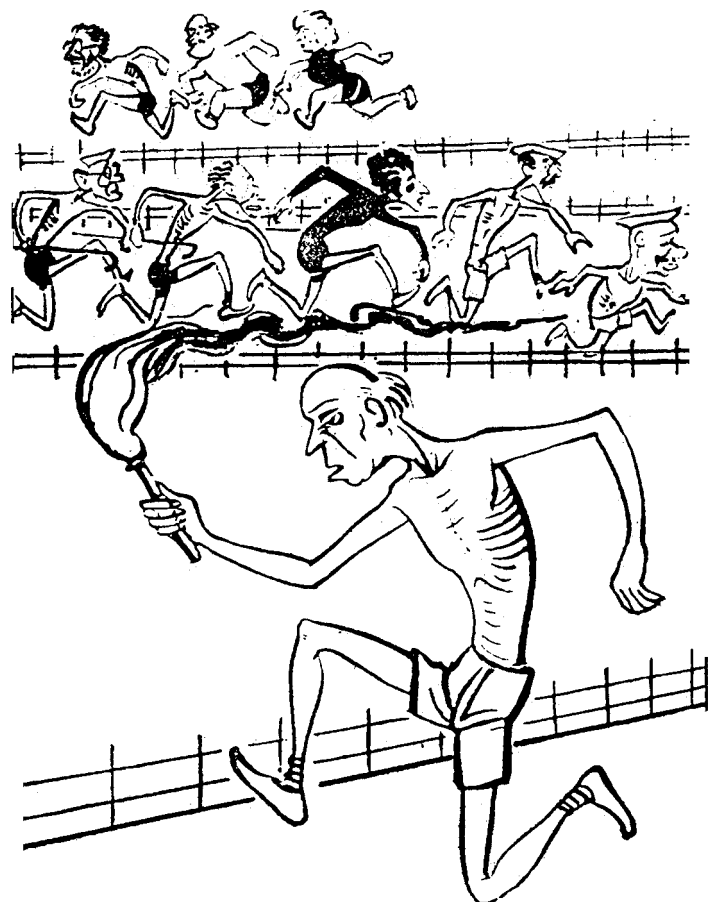
On the fortieth anniversary of Indian Independence, when a journalist asked about his views on present day India, Shankar cited a cartoon he drew during the sixth year of our independence where Nehru was shown as an emaciated mother cradling a six year old imbecile boy. Shankar added that the present condition has not changed much.

Shankar once annoyed a big

name who had the audacity to grant him a "naked" interview while undergoing a body massage, by drawing him "nude" continuously for a period. Frequent and crying appeals made through friends alone could desist Shankar from this "Operation tit for tat". To many politicians and Ministers Shankar came to be known and branded as the "Devil of Delhi".

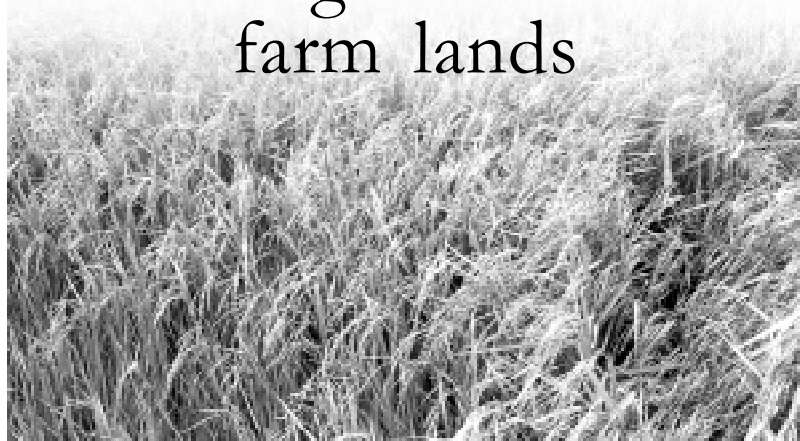
Shankar was a pioneer who nurtured a generation of Cartoonists from India could be proud of. P.K.S.Kutty, Abu Abraham, O.V.Vijayan, Yesudas, Kerala Varma, Ghafoor, T.Samuel, Ranga and many others have been groomed under the tutelage of Shankar. He had a great insight that percolated beyond the physiogony of the people. Cartoon to him was an expression of a constant desire for bettering the condition of man through pungent sarcasm portrayed through lines.

Shankar's weekly eased publication during Emergency in India with its issue dated August 31, 1975 with a telling editorial comments "Dictatorship cannot afford laughter because people may laugh at the dictator and that would't do. In all the years of Hitler, there never was a good comedy, not a good cartoon, not a parody or a spoof..... But Shankar's Weekly is an incurable optimist. We are certain that despite the present situation the world will become a happier and more relaxed place. The spirit of man will in the end overcome all death dealing forces and life will blossom to a degree where humanity will find the highest purpose discharged. Some call this God. We prefer to call it human destiny. And on that though we bid you goodbye and the best of luck". it carried the cartoon "Parting-Not Without Sorrow", with a drummer mounted on a donkey disappear



New crop varieties

Promising for Kerala's farm lands



Suresh Muthukulam
Editor, Kerala Karsakan

What the farmer sows in the depths of the soil is more than just a fistful of seeds. It is a better future for his family, society and nation. Here comes the importance

ing in the horizon to the amusement of the onlookers.

Shankar passed away in December 26, 1989 and I was among those few attended the funeral of this oldest Malayalee of Delhi at Nigambodhi Ghat Electric crematorium, Delhi, not far away from the Samadhi of Jawaharlal Nehru.

Shankar started the International Children's Painting Competition in 1949 and on the spot painting competition for the children of Delhi in 1951. Shankar's Childrens' Book Trust (established in 1959) with a large number of titles for children of all age groups and different mother-tongue, Shankar's International Dolls Museum (1965) with over 6,500 costume Dolls from 85 Countries of the World and Dr.B.C.Roy Memorial Childrens Library (1967) all located in NEHRU HOUSE on the Fleet Street of Delhi's Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg is an everlasting

of seeds and quality planting materials. Quality seed production is a pre-requisite for quality improvement and higher productivity. So high yielding and promising seed production efforts should be geared properly at all levels. Production of new crop varieties which can with-

stand all the present field problems and also help the farmers with high yield and good returns are the essentialities of today. Here there is no other way out apart from eagerly undertaking the research and breeding programs. Now that the various agriculture research stations and the Agricultural University has come out with a series of highyielding good quality crop varieties which are submitted to the farming community of Kerala for cultivation.

monument to the fond memory of Shankar who wishes to be remembered as one who loved children and in turn loved by them. The "Order of Smile" award received in 1977 from the children of Poland, Shankar cherished close to his heart. Shankar was awarded Padmashree in 1954, Padma Bhusan in 1966 and Padma Vibhushan in 1976.

I had several opportunities to observe him in close quarters both at his studios and at his residence in Kotti No.9 Purana Quilan Road, New Delhi. I can say with precision that this colossus among the Cartoonists, *Perunthachan* among the *Marunadan Malayalees* and the Genius who could blend the particular with the Universal was always a child at heart reminding us the familiar dictum that child is the father of Man. To him children whether they belong to India, France, Britain, China, America,

Russia, Sierra Leone, Yugoslavia or Japan, were all like his sons and daughters. Shankar's dream of bringing the children of the world together under one flag will be fulfilled only if concrete efforts are made to launch the Shankar's International Centre for Children the foundation of which was laid by the former President of India Shri.K.R.Narayanan on September 6, 2000 in Chanakyapuri, the most prestigious area of Delhi, overlooking the famous Asoka Hotel and the chain of Foreign Embassies. Efforts are also on to establish an International Cartoon Museum and a Cartoon Academy at Shankar's native place, Kayamkulam, as a memorial to the great son of Kerala.

Rice

Yield maximisation in rice is always possible by varietal improvement. Development of more hybrids with yield advantage, combining resistance to pests and diseases and quality acceptable to different consumer sections has to be given prime importance.

Gouri

Gouri is a multiples resistant rice variety for Kuttanad developed by the Rice Research station, Moncompu, Alleppey. The high-

Shankar who gave a new dimension and intellectual depth to Cartooning is undoubtedly a Titan in the World of Cartoons. He belongs to all climes and ages. May his tribe increase.

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lights of the variety are medium tillering, dwarf, non-lodging nature with medium bold red kernitted grains. Maturity is of 115-120 days. Gouri, is resistant to pests and diseases of Kuttanad like Brown plant Hopper, gall midge, sheath blight and sheat rot.

Swetha

Swetha is a semi tall whiter rice variety for irrigated transplanted low lands of Kerala developed by the Regional Agricultural Research Station, Melepattambi. It matures in 140-145 days (kharif) and 135-140 days (Rabi). This is resistant to gall midge and shoot bores. Swetha is suitable for transplanting in low lands of Palakkad. The grain yield is 4500-5000 kg 1 ha and straw yield 5000-6000kg/ha.

Varsha

Varsha is a semitall rice variety suitable for direct seeding and transplanting in the double crop wetlands of Palakkad and Thrissur. The farmers have good opinion of the variety regarding its yielding ability and quality of the produce. The grains are brown tinged straw coloured with red kernels. Varsha is good for kole lands also. The yield is 4500-5000 kg/ha grains and 4500-5000 kg/ha straw. The days of maturity are 115/120 days (kharif), 105-110 days (Rabi) and 105-110 days (summer).

Kunjukunju Priya is a promising rice variety developed from the popular rice variety of Palakkad called 'Kunjukunju'. College of Horticulture at Vellanikkara is the agency responsible for developing this variety. This variety with red colour and good cooking quality is suitable for the double cropped areas of Trichur and Ernakulam. This is moderately resistant to pests and diseases.

Kunjukunju Varna is a pigmented rice variety developed from Kunjukunju. This variety is recommended for general cultivation during the virippu and mondakan seasons. The rice is red with good cooking quality.



Chingam is a semitall short duration dry sown variety suitable for the virippu season of Onattukara. The variety developed at the Onattukara Regional Agricultural Research Station, Kayamkulam has a maturity of 95-100 days and an average yield of 3910 kg/ha. The variety has a special ability to withstand the dry spell.

Dhanu is promising semittal mundakan variety for Onattukara developed by mutation breeding. It is of high yield and tolerance to pests and diseases. It matures in 159 days and resistant to shattering, suitable for second crop season. Under average conditions the grain yield is 3750kg per hectare and straw yield 7188kg/ha.

Tubers

Tubercrops are the most important food crops of humankind after cereals. The life supporting roles of tropical tuber crops like tapioca and sweet potato are well known.

Sree Arun is a sweet potato variety which produced significantly higher yield as compared to the existing local varieties. Developed by Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram this has a maturity of 3 months, fusiform tubers with pink skin and cream flesh colour. Average yield is 20-28 tons/hectare.

Sree Varun is another high

yielding sweet potato variety with three months maturity with the same yield as Sree Arun. It is more suited to upland conditions.

Vellayani Harswa is a highly yielding short duration tapioca variety developed at the instructional farm, Agriculture college, Vellayani. The duration is of 155-180 days. It is a dwarf variety with profuse branching and foliation and has a very good cooking quality. This variety is highly accepted by farmers.

Vegetables

Susthira is a high yielding Bhini variety resistant to yellow vein Mosaic Virus. Recommended for warm humid tropics of Kerala preferably for April-May sowing. The fruit yield per plant is 1.5kg.

Swarna is a high yielding pumpkin variety developed at the Department of Olericulture, college of Horticulture, Vellanikkara. The features are high flesh thickness, among coloured flesh and good yield. It is rich in carotene.

Anugraha is a high yielding bacterial wilt resistant chilli variety. This is green chilli with early flowering nature. The green fruit yield per plant is 549 grams. The long fruits have medium pungency.

Anagha is a bacterial wilt and crack resistant tomato variety. The fruits are reddish, round, medium,

slightly acidic with an average fruit weight of 45 gm.

Baby is a high yielding small fruited snake gourd variety. The fruits are white with attractive appearance. They are 30-40 cm. long with an average weight of 474 gm. The crop will be ready for harvest by 55th day and the potential yield is 56.83 ton/ha.

Mohini is a high yielding amaranth variety. The stem has a reddish colouration at the basal parts. It is highly branching with 89-90 cm at flowering. This gives 8-10 harvests, on an average gives 13.22 tons of greens per hectare. The leaves contain high carotene, protein. This is good for commercial as well as homestead cultivation.

Varun is a high yielding semi trailing purple vegetable cowpea variety. The pods are light purple with 27-30 cm length. 110-132 pods make one kg. gives first harvest by 40 days after planting. It gives an average yield of 8.4 tons/ha.

Anaswara is a semi-trailing vegetable cowpea with excellent cooking quality and high yields. The first harvest can be done by 38 days after sowing upto 75 days. The pods are bold seeded and light green coloured. It gives an average yield of 12.5 tons ha.

SPICES

IISR Rejatha is a promising high-yielding ginger variety released by the Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode. It has good quality, high oil and oleoresin content, dry recovery and low fibre content. It is a comparatively short statured plant, recommended all over Kerala. The maturity is 200 days and average yield 22400kg per hectare fresh ginger.

IISR Mahima is also a ginger variety developed at IISR having plumpy, bold round rhizomes, robust and medium tall vigorous plant with a maturity of 200 days. The average yield is 22300kg/ha fresh ginger.

Varna is a high yielding

curcumin turmeric variety developed by Kerala Agricultural University. The rhizome yield is also high with bright orange yellow colour. The maturity is 240 to 270 days and the variety is good for curcumin extraction. The resin content is low. The dry rhizome yield is 6.37 kg/3m².

Sona is a high yielding high curcumin turmeric variety developed by KAU with an average yield of 4.02 tons/ha. The rhizome has orange yellow colour and is good for curcumin and deoresin extraction.

IISR Viswahasree is a highly yield, early bearing and high quality nutmeg tree developed at the IISR through clonal selection. The tree is bushy with a yield of 1000 fruits at the 8th year. It is a heavy bearer with fruits appearing in clusters. The essential oil, myristicin, elemine, oleoresin and butter content are high.

PV-2 is a new high yielding bold capsuled small cardamom variety developed at the Cardamom Research Station, Pampadumpara. The dry recovery percentage is also high. The average dry yield is 982



kg/ha. The maturity is 120 days and is suitable for the high ranges of Idukki district.

Medicinal Plants

Kasthuri is a high yielding aromatic kacholam variety developed at KAU. The rhizomes are light brown with large secondary rhizomes and crop duration 210 to 240 days. The rhizome yield is high with high volatile oil content. It is acceptable to the perfumery industry due to this. A good intercrop in coconut gardens.

Rajani is a high yielding oleoresin rich Kacholam variety having an average yield of 2.19 tons/ha. of dry rhizomes. The rhizomes are creamy white and medium bold and is highly favoured for oleoresin extraction.

Plantation Crops

Cocoa

CCRP8, CCRP 9, CCRP 10 are three high yielding cocoa varieties developed by the KAU. All the three are varieties with very vigorous growth with green medium sized pods and high disease resistance. The CCRP8 gives 90 pods/tree/year and CCRP 10 gives 70 pods/ tree/year.

Cashew

Damodar is a high yield cashew of 21.25 kg nuts per tree per year and bold nut size developed at the Cashew Research station, Madakkathara. It is tolerant to tea mosquito.

Raghav is another cashew variety with bold nuts and good yield. The yield is 14.65 kg nuts per tree per year and suited to all regions of Kerala.

Sesamum

Thilarani is a promising sesame variety developed at the Onattukara Regional Agricultural Research Station. This has high yield and early maturity and is suited for summer rice follows for third crop. The plant is semi tall, compact with capsule packing. The average yield is 580 kg/ha and has an oil content of 50.2%

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KFC for tourism with representatives from Tourism for the speedy clearance of tourism related projects. Simplify the procedure for sanctions;

Launch special campaigns for NRI and foreign investments in tourism sector;

Encourage the investors to take up projects to establish connectivity between tourist destinations within the State by air and road;

Encourage development of products such as golf, shopping facilities, marina, amusement & recreational park etc;

Use land bank scheme operated by Tourist Resorts (Kerala) Ltd. to acquire potential land for tourism development and for attracting private investment;

Encourage small businesses to serve tourists through internet access centres, free telecommunication services, tourist information centres, local transportation agencies and hygienic food joints.

5.Continue focus on Backwaters, Ayurveda and Eco-Tourism



House Boats nowadays gain popularity among tourists.

Long Term: Backwaters

Link the waterways from Kovalam to Kasargod to enable operation of tourist boats including houseboats;

Develop necessary infrastructure all along the backwaters such a boat terminals, jetties, wayside facilities, fuel-pumping stations, sewage pumping stations etc;

Interlink all the major nodes along the backwaters with the road networks to enable easy transits;

Initiate measures to enhance the quality of ecology and environment of backwaters;

Establish proper solid and liquid waste management system for backwaters.

Ayurveda

Allow only approved ayurveda centres by Department of Tourism and Health Department to function at tourism centres in the name of tourism; Educate tourists about genuine Ayurveda

Eco-Tourism

To develop a chain of forest lodges across the various sanctuaries of the State by converting unused or under-used Inspection Bungalows, Inspection quarters and other buildings of the Forest Department;

Evolve a clear cut strategy to coordinate all Departments and the private sector who are having eco-tourism recourses and provide synergy for the development of the same;

Market eco-tourism products of Kerala in the international scenario as a distinct product;

Prepare a monitoring mechanism for eco-tourism products;

Develop Zero waste Zones in and around tourist destinations;

Develop and promote non-conventional use of energy;

Constitute eco-development committee in tourism areas.

Medium Term Backwater

Regulate activities along the entire backwaters, canals and lake stretches with respect to setbacks from the water front, design of the buildings, solid waste and sewage disposal etc;

Incentives offered to Pvt. sector investments

General investment subsidy of 10% of capital cost including land, building, furniture, furnishings, equipment, landscaping etc. subject to a maximum of Rs.10.00 lakhs will continue for approved tourism units. Additional subsidy on the following will also be provided.

a) Investment in pollution control facilities and equipments such as solid/liquid waste management equipments for recycling of wastewater, sanitation facilities, captive power generation (generators) etc @ 15% of such investments subject to a separate ceiling of Rs.5.00 lakhs.

b) Projects with capital investment exceeding Rs.50.00 crores may be considered for a special incentive package except tax-based incentives, not below the benefits otherwise eligible, on a case-to case-basis.

c) Special package of incentives will be considered for channelising Foreign Director Investment (FDI) in tourism and infrastructure projects.

The existing electricity tariff system of remitting the commercial tariff and getting the difference of commercial tariff and industrial tariff from Department of Tourism will continue.



Formulate Backwater Tourism Development Authority with representatives from all stakeholders exclusively to co-ordinate the infrastructural development activities for the sustainable use of the backwaters for tourism purposes;

Stop discharging the sewage directly to the water by any boat used for tourism purpose by enforcing usage of alternative methods.

Ayurveda

Constitute a committee with members from Department of Tourism, Directorate of Indian System of Medicine, and tourism industry to constantly review the implications in using Ayurveda as a tourism product.

Eco Tourism

Evolve strategies to attract private investment in eco-tourism products;

Evolve strategies to empower local people to benefit from the emerging economic opportunities;

Evolve special efforts to tap the eco-tourism potential of the Forest Department, which can ultimately lead to conservation of the resources

Create eco-tourism centres in the backwaters, Wayanad, Idukki, Kasargod and Kannur District.

Develop Plantation Tourism involving public sector enterprises, Oil Palm India Limited, and Rehabilitation Plantation Limited, which fall in the region of Thenmala eco-tourism;

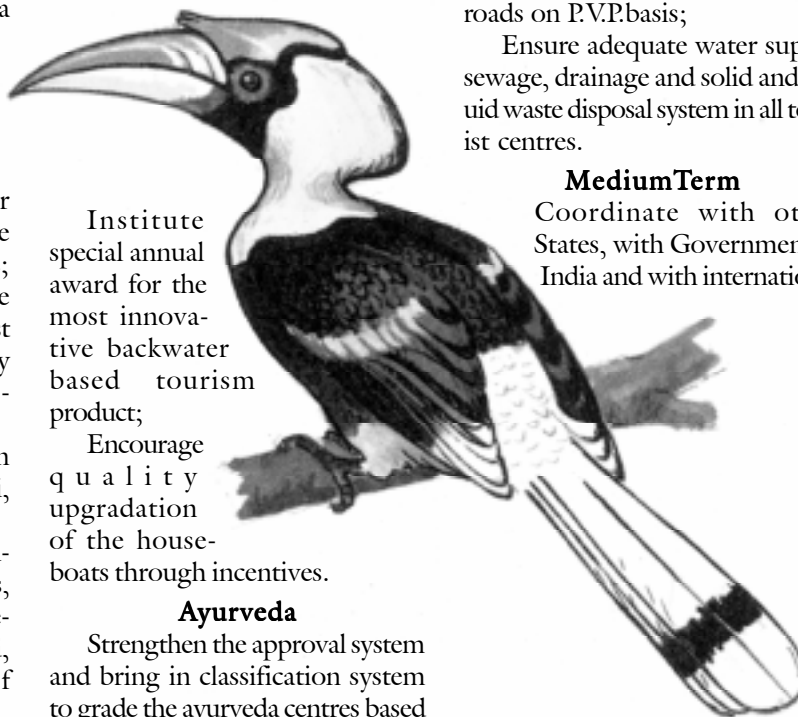
Develop the concept of rural tourism.

Short Term Backwater

Construct basic tourism facilities such as boat terminals and waterside facility centres along the houseboat cruise routes from Kollam to Ernakulam;

Disperse backwater based tourism activities to Malabar Region by developing infrastructure at potential centres such as Chettuva, Kadalundi, Kozhikode, Parassinikkadavu, Neeleswaram, Valiyaparamba etc;

Prepare a master plan for the sustainable use of the backwaters of Kerala for tourism purposes;



Institute special annual award for the most innovative backwater based tourism product;

Encourage quality upgradation of the houseboats through incentives.

Ayurveda

Strengthen the approval system and bring in classification system to grade the ayurveda centres based on the quality of facilities and services.

Eco Tourism

Identify and develop at least 25 special trek routes and promote in a strictly controlled way. Tourism Department/ Forest Department may do the management of the customer interface;

Start Elephant rides at three or four sanctuaries;

Formulate specific eco-tourism strategy for Kerala through participatory planning process;

Completion of the ongoing works related to eco-friendly general tourism at Thenmala and surroundings;

Establish the environment education centres in the State;

Initiate eco-tourism program at Konni and Achankovil;

Develop and promote eco and wild safari activities in sanctuaries.

6. To concentrate on development of basic infrastructure and new tourism products

Long Term

Develop direct air connections from all major tourism markets to all the three international airports;

Develop all the major tourism roads on P.V.P.basis;

Ensure adequate water supply, sewage, drainage and solid and liquid waste disposal system in all tourist centres.

Medium Term

Coordinate with other States, with Government of India and with international

Great Indian (Pied) Hornbill

tourism bodies like WTO, WTTC and financial bodies like UNDP, World Bank, ADB etc. for seeking assistance in tourism development;

Develop new cruise circuits connecting major ports in South India and neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka, Maldives and Mauritius;

Prepare Master Plans for identifying and creating additional tourist areas comprising of religious sites, beach/backwater resorts, business destinations etc.

Short Term

Prepare a project report by identifying all major tourist roads and pose it for external financial assistance in collaboration with PWD;

Initiate basic infrastructure projects at the tourist destinations and get it done through other departments and agencies giving financial assistance, if needed or outsourcing;

Improve facilities at airports, sea ports and bus stations;

Focussed development of identified Special Tourism Areas/Zones;

Develop inter-state tourism circuits connecting all destinations in South India;

Sites of well-known temples/ places of worship to be developed and given sufficient publicity as religious sites for pilgrimage;

Develop exclusive pilgrim circuits;

Develop quality maps for the entire State as well as for specific

places of interest within it;

Install qualitatively excellent road tourism signages throughout the state;

Encourage homestay scheme;

Use Kerala cuisine as an effective instrument for promotion of tourism;

Promote adventure tourism including water sports.

7. To create sufficient quality human resources in the field of tourism within the State

Long Term

Open an institution of international repute in the state to train quality managerial manpower to manage the tourism industry in the state.

Create the best trained personnel in the tourism industry to cater the needs both inside and outside the state.

Medium Term

Create a Board/Institution to regulate and approve the Institutions conducting tourism related courses.

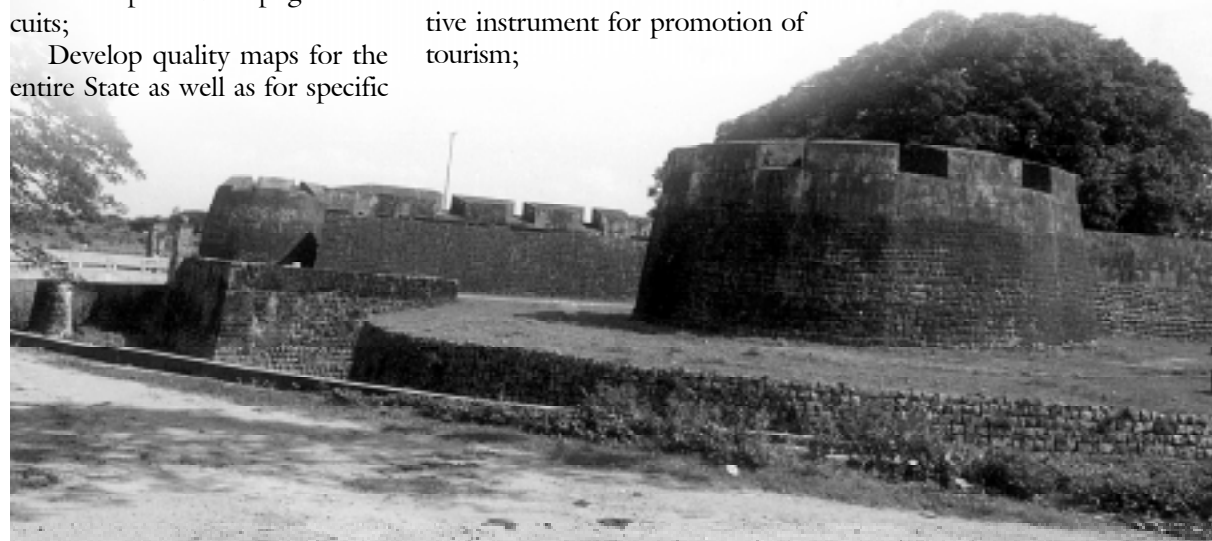
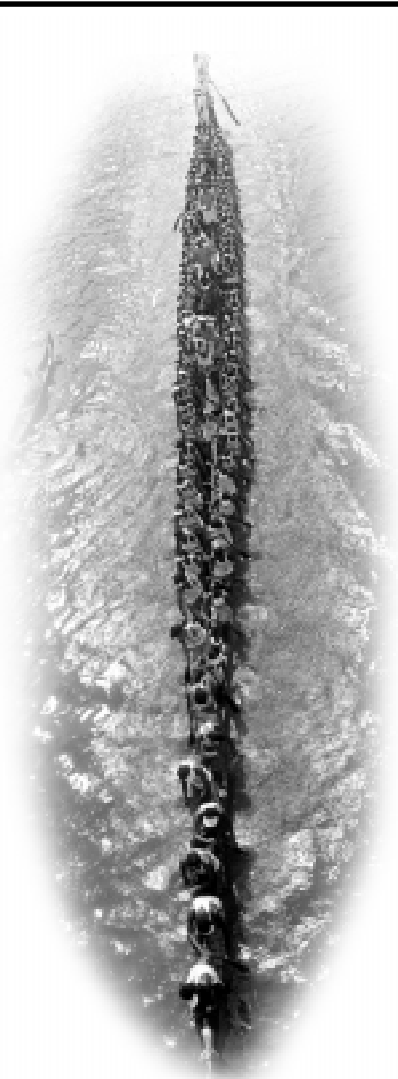
Short Term

Strengthen KIITS to start new courses directly benefiting the tourism industry;

Conduct continuous training programs to train the various categories of people such as taxi drivers, cooks, waiters, guides, information offices/ assistants etc. engaged in the tourism industry;

Encourage starting of new institutions with quality standards in private sector.

8. To strengthen the institutional mechanism





Long Term

Professionalise the entire functions of Department of Tourism;

Medium Term

Separate the hospitality function from the Department of Tourism and form a separate Hospitality Department;

Strengthen Planning, Marketing and Information wings of Department of Tourism by bringing more professionals into it;

Stop District Tourism Promotion Councils from direct management of facilities. Identify new role for DTPCs in information dissemination, quality control and micro-level regulation.

Short Term

Enact new role for Department of Tourism to regulate the developments and ensure quality of products and services, marketing and information dissemination;

Professionalise all the areas of tourism;

Restructure Kerala Tourism Development Corporation.

9.To develop and promote souvenir, handicrafts, artifacts and shopping industry

Long Term

Develop souvenir & handicrafts as important tourism products;

Create the best-trained personnel in the souvenir, handicrafts and artefact field.

Medium Term

Organise shopping festivals for handicrafts and souvenirs with Kerala flavour

Standardise the quality of souvenir, handicrafts and handloom products and bring in a system of approval and classification.

Short Term

Engage a consultant (individual/agency) for the development of Souvenir industry in the State. To scope of work would include assessment of present scenario, design, quality and marketing;

Identify new items & products in handicrafts, handloom & souvenir industry sector;

Improve the design and skills of artisans;

Agencies such as Kerala Handicrafts Development Corporation, Khadi Board, Kudumbasree, DTPCs, NGOs etc. will be involved in developing souvenir & handicrafts as important tourism products;

Promote the products through suitable marketing strategies.

10. To enact proper legislation to sustain the industry and to regulate tourism activities

Long Term

Enact and enforce legislation for achieving this objective.

Medium Term

Revise the Excise law to distinguish between quality hotels providing liquor as a facility (bar attached with hotels) and normal bar where the hotel is attached to a bar to meet the legal requirements;

Revise the laws on entertainment tax, luxury tax, sales tax, building tax etc. to incorporate provisions for encouraging investors;

Enact and enforce proper building rules to ensure quality in hotels/resorts etc;

Include punitive measures to violator.

Short Term

Enact Tourism Conservation and Preservation Act to regulate the developments in the identified tourism zones and ensure quality services in all major sectors of the industry;





Enact and enforce proper liquid and solid waste management systems for hospitality industry.

11. To explore and develop new markets for Kerala Tourism products at domestic and international markets

Long Term

Focus on domestic tourism, Asia and Gulf countries;

Acknowledge the emerging economic super power status of China to attract more tourists;

Market as an eco-tourism destination with strict guidelines to investors, visitors against mass tourism, human rights violation and bio-piracy.

Medium Term

Focus on Europe, US, Japan, China, Gulf and domestic markets; Make use of better political relation in the South Asian region to attract more regional tourists.

Short Term

Focus on Europe, US, Japan, Gulf and domestic markets;

Continue and strengthen marketing in the high yielding markets mentioned above;

Undertake promotional activities with the help of Central Government agencies such as Government of India Tourist Offices in India and abroad;

Use Information Technology ef-

ficiently and effectively for the promotion of tourism;

Persuade Government of India to revive the scheme of Leave Travel Concession.

12. To conserve and Preserve the cultural heritage of the State

Long Term

Create a partnership with industry and NGOs to educate the public about the need to conserve and preserve the heritage and implement an action plan.

Medium Term

Work with INTACH, Art and Heritage Commission and Cultural institutions to synergies tourism and culture. Ensure culture is not degraded by commercialisation;

Develop a Museum of Theyyam and other Folk Arts in North Kerala;

Highlight the sites of unique activities in Kerala, like rubber tapping, today tapping, Kerala's culture, unique pilgrim centres like, Sabarimala, Guruvayoor, Synagogue at Kochin, the oldest Church, the oldest Mosque, sites at Calicut where Vasco Da Gama and Chinese Admirals landed etc.

Short Term

Introduce legislation through appropriate departments to conserve and preserve cultural and heri-

tage properties;

Encourage promotion of local cultural programs, folk arts, boat races etc;

Promote regular traditional cultural programs in key destinations;

Promote approval of institutions giving short-term courses in performing arts of Kerala and give them wide publicity;

Promote a few colourful festivals intensively;

Promote a few major tourist oriented traditional festivals in each district;

Develop Heritage walkways in Thiruvananthapuram.

13. To ensure safety and security of tourists

Long Term

Strict legislation on ensuring the quality of all tourism products;

Mechanism for speedy disposal of cases where tourists are involved.

Medium Term

Improve communication facilities at tourist destinations;

Introduce insurance scheme to tourists;

Ensure quality of all tourism products in terms of its safety conditions.

Short Term

Every brochure to contain the Do's and Don's for tourists;

Deploy sufficient numbers of Tourist Policies (men and Women) at major tourist destinations;

Deploy sufficient numbers of lifeguards at beaches;

Open a complaint and suggestions cell at the Directorate of Tourism to handle complaints from the tourists;

Strengthen mechanism to discourage and prevent illegal activities by touts and middlemen who harass tourists.