

# Life Dign

**P.K. Gurudasan**

Minister for Labour and Excise



**R**ight from the days of the first Communist Ministry in 1957 headed by EMS Namboodirippad, Kerala had always been in the forefront of introducing various measures for the uplift of the downtrodden. The present LDF Government is also vigorously pursuing a pro-worker agenda. The approach of the present Government is in sharp contrast to the previous UDF Government, which had all along pursued a policy, which was in tune with the Globalisation and liberalization policies of the Union Government. While dealing with the labour welfare measures in Kerala, the first thing to be mentioned is the introduction of a host of Labour Welfare Fund Boards, numbering 18 out of which 13 Welfare Fund Boards are functioning under the Labour Department. The last one in this direction is the Kerala Shops and Commercial Establishment Workers Welfare Fund Scheme, that covers more than 10 lakhs workers belonging to establishments such as shops and commercial establishments, Private hospitals, private paramedical institutions, hotel and restaurants, petrol, diesel, auto, gas agencies etc.

For the first time, the arrears on account of agricultural workers pension have been released in full. Before Onam the entire balance i.e. arrears upto July will be paid.

During the past 14 months of the LDF Government, particular attention has been given to open several closed



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establishments where thousands of workers became jobless. Several rounds of talks were held with the managements of the closed establishments and trade union representatives. The initiative taken to open the closed tea plantations is worth mentioning. As a result of the efforts of the Government, a considerable number of the estate owners have come forward to open their estates. The estate and factory owned by Cochin-Malabar Plantations, Bonakkad estate owned by Mahavir Plantations, MMJ Plantations, have since been opened. In spite of the difficult financial position of the Government, several concessions such as waiver of the minimum demand charges of electricity, agriculture income tax etc. have been granted to those managements

improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the plantation workers of Idukki District.

Another important achievement is the decision to implement the minimum wages to plantation workers notified on February 18, 2006. In this connection it is to be remembered that the above notification was stayed by the High Court. It was after several rounds of discussions with the managements and the trade unions that we were able to arrive at a decision in this regard.

Cashew industry is one of the most important traditional industries in the state, which provides employment to more than three lakh workers. The minimum wages of cashew workers were

**The prime responsibility of our Labour Department is undoubtedly enforcement of labour laws. Instructions have already been issued to the officials concerned to see that all pending labour disputes are settled within a definite time frame.**



who have come forward to open their plantations. Immediately after assumption of office by the LDF Government, the 'layams' of the tea workers were repaired spending Rs. one crore. Free food grains, medical care, educational assistance, other relief measures through the Plantations Relief Committee etc., are some of the measures taken by the Government to alleviate the poor living condition of the plantation workers. Of late, Government have sanctioned Rs. 2.98 crore for the

revised with effect from 1st January 2007. In order to give proper attention to the industry and the welfare of the workers the Cashew Special Office was revived. A senior IAS Officer was appointed as Cashew Special Officer. Realising that one of the major hurdles facing the industry, is the shortage of raw cashew nuts, the Government have constituted the "Kerala State Agency for Cashew Cultivation" (KSACC) under the Cashew Special Officer. The agency has already started functioning and is in



the process of identifying vacant Government land suitable for Cashew cultivation. The ten factories owned by the CAPEX, which remained closed for the past six months have been opened by the end of July.

The prime responsibility of our Labour Department is undoubtedly enforcement of labour laws. Instructions have already been issued to the officials concerned to see that all pending labour disputes are settled within a definite time frame. We could ensure a peaceful industrial climate. Our aim is maximum production, quality production and better productivity. We have already taken necessary steps to ensure that all interstate migrant workers are getting minimum wages as well as basic amenities.

It is true that a lot of things remain to be done in the field of labour welfare. But during the span of 14 months, we could adopt a series of measures influencing the living conditions of the working class.

Let us march ahead for a better tomorrow. ■

**K.S. Premachandra Kurup IAS**

The Labour Department came into existence with the inception of the Kerala State. The Department is conferred with the primary duty to ensure enforcement of labour laws, providing services for prevention and settlement of industrial disputes and performing other related functions to promote all round industrial peace. It endures to maintain a peaceful and calm atmosphere in the industrial sector and to safeguard the interest of the working class. Peace and harmony prevail in the industrial sector due to the timely and able intervention of the Department. On a critical analysis, it can be seen that the Department has succeeded in its mission. The cardinal functions of the Labour Department include conciliation to resolve industrial disputes, enforcement of labour laws and welfare measures through plethora of pioneering welfare schemes.

The concept of Industrial Relations Committees is a unique development in Kerala that changed the entire character of Industrial Relations in the Country. These committees are non-statutory bodies constituted on the strength of Government Orders. An exploratory conference held at Alappuzha in 1940 at the initiative of the then Diwan of Travancore seeded the initiative to facilitate multi-employer, industry-wide joint consultation and collective bargaining. Due to media publicity given to the proceedings, the recalcitrant parties moderate their behaviour and relax their rigid attitudes. The success stories has even attracted the first National Commission on Labour headed by the Justice Gajendragadkar and suggested that other States in India could emulate this experiment.

It is true that an exodus of workers from other States of the country is visible in Kerala seeking employment, particularly in the construction sector. At present major construction companies in the State are depending on migrant workers for most of their labour force requirements. The aversion of Kerala Worker to such manual job and their non-availability as and when required are the main reasons for this. The migrant

workers are attracted to Kerala due to the reasonably high rate of wages existing here when compared to the poverty and misery they are subjected to in their native States. The State Labour Department is taking all possible steps to protect them from exploitation, in consideration of their illiteracy and language problems. The Labour Officers have been instructed to safeguard the interests of the poor workers from other States in search of their livelihood. District Level squads were formed to make inspections at the work sites as well as their residential areas to ascertain the facilities provided to these workers. Awareness meetings and medical camps were conducted for enlightening the migrant workers about their legally entitled rights and benefits to be provided by their employers. Medical camps are also being conducted for them.

The Labour Department has also taken up the challenge to eradicate the menace of child labour. The problem of

child labourers over the years has assumed international dimension. This phenomenon is prevalent throughout India and the Universe. Compared to other States in India, Kerala has very low percentage of child labourers. It is the expansion of school system rather than the enforcement of labour legislation that has reduced the amount of child labour in Kerala. The State Labour Department is enforcing the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 and the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Rules, 1993. These enactments contain very definite regulatory measures with regard to the engagement of children for work. Engagement of children in hazardous occupations is prohibited under this legislation whereas it is permitted in non-hazardous occupations. But the case of street children has not come under the purview of these legislations.

In the light of the landmark judgment of the Supreme Court of India in December, 1996, Child Labour Rehabilitation-cum-Welfare Societies were formed in all the 14 districts of Kerala for the all round welfare of the working children.

The Labour Department is committed to the cause of eliminating the tendency for engaging children for work. Awareness can play a vital role in tackling the issue. Hence, the Labour Department has conducted awareness camps throughout the State to raise a consensus among the people in various sectors of the society. Recently the Government of



# Fostering Better Relations



India have prohibited employment of children below 14 years as domestic workers or servants and in dhabas (road-side eateries), restaurants, hotels, motels, teashops, resorts, spas or other recreational centres. The Department has formed three regional squads in the State for monitoring the enforcement of the said notification. The Regional Joint Labour Commissioners are the heads of the regional squads with District Labour Officers (Enforcement) and the Assistant Labour Officers concerned as its members. These squads will seek the assistance from the Resident's Associations and Non Governmental Organisations in locating children engaged in prohibited employments.

The Department of Labour and Rehabilitation, Government of Kerala proposes to conduct a child labour survey as per the direction of the Government of India to ascertain the number of working children in hazardous occupations and processes as listed under the schedule of the Child Labour

(Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986. The Secretary to Government, Labour and Rehabilitation Department, Government of Kerala and the Labour Commissioner, Government of Kerala are the authorities of the survey. The survey is envisaged with the financial assistance of the Government of India at the rate of Rs.2.75 Lakh for each district.

The Labour Department also has the duty to undertake the welfare measures for the unorganised sector workers in the State, which account for the lion's share of the population. The promising achievements of the State has been instrumental to provide social security to different classes of workers such as Abkari, Agriculture, Artisans and Skilled Workers, Cashew Workers, Headload Workers, etc. An amount of Rs.1,97,42,09,316 has been issued as pension for the last 30 months and Rs. 49,20,000 for the tree climbing workers welfare scheme. The workers of closed cashew factories are allotted an amount of Rs.23,15,000. Rs.1,80,44,000 has been sanctioned as

benefit to the workers of other closed establishments.

Labour Department has initiated various steps for the reopening of the closed plantations in tune with the directions of P. K. Gurudasan, Minister for Labour and Excise. Various conciliation meetings have brought about consensus and the Government have written off the plantation tax, agricultural tax and exempted tea-manufacturing units from paying electricity minimum demand charges. The Government have permitted them to remit the exact electricity charges for the energy actually consumed. On the above understanding, following nine plantations have reopened since the present Government assumed power. ■

The writer is Labour Commissioner, Government of Kerala



PHOTOS : I&PRD

# Ray of Hope in Shops

H.B Naseer

The Government of Kerala promulgated the 'Kerala Shops & Commercial Establishment Workers Welfare Fund Act - 2006' to provide for the constitution of a "Fund" to promote the welfare and to pay pension to workers coming under the purview of the Kerala Shops & Commercial Establishments Act, 1960 and self employed persons. It came into force on 15th March 2007. The 'Kerala Shops & Commercial Establishments Workers Welfare Fund Scheme' framed under the above Act came into force on 15/3/2007 vide GO (Ms) No 29/2007/LBR dated 15/3/2007. The 'Kerala Shops & Commercial Establishments Workers Welfare Fund Board has been constituted with C.K. Viswanathan, Secretary, Labour & Rehabilitation Department as Chairman of the Board and the scheme is being implemented through this Board. The Minister for Labour & Excise, P.K. Gurudasan, held the state level inauguration of the Scheme on April 11, 2007.

The Head office of the Board is at Thiruvananthapuram. The Chief Executive officer is the Secretary of the Board. The Scheme provides coverage for workers working under the following establishments. It is expected that about 10 lakhs workers are coming under the purview of the scheme.

1. Trade / commercial establishment, 2. Hospital, Nursing Home, Ayurvedic Pharmacy, Dispensary, 3. Medical Shop, Para Medical Institution, 4. Parcel Service, 5. Petrol-diesel auto Gas bunks, 6. Fish processing Establishment, 7. Food Processing Establishment, 8. Textile Manufacturing Establishment, 9. Hotel, Restaurant, Meat Shop, 10. Computer, Computer allied service Establishment, 11. Printing Press, 12. Telephone Booth, 13. Courier service, 14. Cooking Gas distribution Agency, 15. Hostel, 16. Hi11 produce-procurement and marketing establishment 17. Small scale copra processing unit, 18. Small scale oil mill, 19. Leather procurement establishment, 20. Small scale foot wear-bag



manufacturing establishment, 21. Cinema theatre, 22. Photo and video studio, 23. Bakery, 24. Automobile-engineering establishment, 25. Establishment providing sound Light and decoration, 26. Electronics / Electrical Technicians.

### Contribution to the Fund

The contribution to the fund is as follows.

- (1) Every member shall contribute to the fund Rs. 20 per month
- (2) Every Employer shall contribute to the fund Rs. 20 per month in respect of each worker employed by him.
- (3) A Self employed person shall contribute Rs. 40 per month.
- (4) The Government shall contribute by way of grant, an amount of rupees five per month paid by each member or twenty five percent of the employee's contribution, and whichever is higher.

The employer shall remit the monthly contribution in respect of each month together with the employee contribution to the fund through the banks designated for this purpose by the board. The contribution can also be remitted in advance once in 6/12 months also.

### Membership

Every Worker who has completed 18 years of age but has not completed 50

years of age and who is not coming under the purview of the Factories Act 1948 or Plantation Labour Act 1951 or those working in the establishments where any other welfare fund of Govt of Kerala are applicable and in establishments exempted by the Government from the provisions of the Kerala Shops & Commercial Establishments Act, 1960 and those who are getting benefit under the purview of any other law, provided he/she has completed 90 days of service are eligible for membership in the fund.

'Self employed person' means a person who actually engages himself mainly in a work coming under the purview of the Kerala Shops & Commercial Establishments Act, 1960 for the livelihood without employing any workers and which does not include a person who is a member of Vyapari Vyavasai Workers welfare fund or Ration Dealers welfare Fund.

Application for membership should be submitted to the Inspector/District Executive Officer in the prescribed form. A Certificate to prove age as specified below will also be submitted along with the application.

- (i) School Records.
- (ii) Certificate from the Registrar of Births and Deaths.
- (iii) Passport.
- (iv) Driving License
- (v) Voter identity card.

### Cancellation and renewal of membership

If the contribution to the fund is continuously defaulted for a period of one year, the membership will be automatically ceased. However if that worker submits an application citing reasons for defaulting the payment of contribution, his membership will be resumed on repayment of arrear contribution together with fine as decided by the board. The resumption can be availed only twice during service.

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There is provision in the scheme for providing educational assistance for the education of children of members who have contributed to the fund continuously for a period of one year.

**K.P. Sasidhar**

**M**igration is a process of mankind since time immemorial. The nomadic moved from one place to another in search of pastures for their cattle and a good living condition for themselves. Migration can be of two types; in migration and out migration. Immigration and emigration are the two characteristic features of out migration. Immigration or emigration also causes problems for the natives. So also in migration. In migration or interstate migration is also a serious problem for any country in the world. In India also interstate migration creates problems for the government and the people. The interstate migration in search of employment, particularly among the working class, has become a serious issue since independence. The recruitment of labours by contractors for nominal wages and engaging them in unfavourable conditions are some other. Government of India has come forward with stringent action to safeguard the interest of the exploited class.

Besides, the system of exploitation prevalent in large construction sites in the states like Orissa raised the question of protection and welfare of interstate migrant workmen. As such the 28th Session of the Labour Ministers' Conference held in New Delhi on 26th October, 1976 recommended to set up a compact committee and the Committee was constituted in February, 1977. The Committee recommended for a separate legislation to regulate employment of interstate migrant workers as it felt that the provisions of Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 would not take care of the malpractices indulged by the contractors. Accordingly, the Interstate Migrant Workman (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act was passed in 1979.

The Interstate Migrant Workman (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 is applicable to every establishment in which five or more interstate migrant workman (whether or not in addition to the other workmen) are employed or



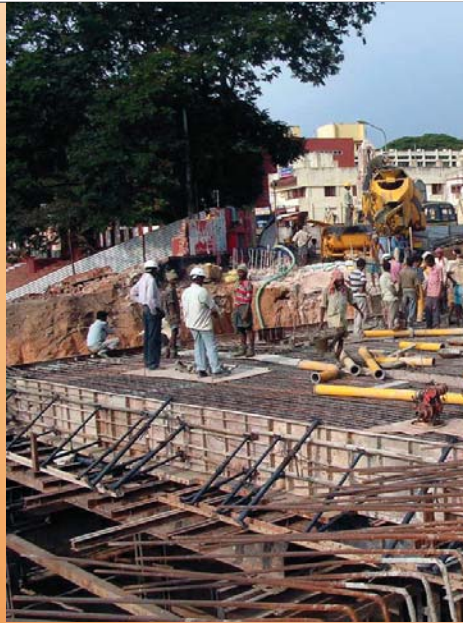
# Migrant



who were employed on any day of the preceding twelve months,; and also to every contractor who employs or who employed five or more interstate migrant workman (whether or not in addition to the other workmen) on any day preceding twelve months. The Central Government is the appropriate government in relation to any establishment pertaining to any industry carried on or by under the authority of the Central government or pertaining to any such controlled industry as may be specified in this behalf by the Central Government or any establishment of any railway, cantonment Board, major port, mine or oil field or any establishment of a banking or insurance company and in all other cases not mentioned above State Government will be the appropriate Government.

Interstate Migrant Workman means “any person who is recruited by or through a contractor in one state under an agreement or other arrangement for employment in an establishment in another state, whether with or without the knowledge of the Principal Employer i.e. the employing department or organisation.”

The Central Industrial Relation Machinery (CIRM) under the Ministry of Labour, Government of India enforces this Act of 1979 and the Central Rules, 1980 in all the ‘establishments’ and ‘contractors’ that come within the purview of the central sphere as per the definition of appropriate government given under the Act. As the regional head,



the Regional Labour Commissioner (Central), Cochin monitors the enforcement of this labour legislation by the Labour Enforcement Officer (Central) and Assistant Labour Commissioner (Central) in the Cochin region. (Cochin region consists of the state of Kerala , Union Territory of Lakshadweep and Mahe.) As there has been a tremendous increase in the employment of interstate migrant workman in the State of Kerala (particularly in the cities) during the years 2004, 2005 and 2006 the total number of inspections conducted by the CIRM officers during the above period was also high. A total number of 65 establishments (including contractors) were inspected during the period out of

which ‘53’ establishments were prosecuted for violating the provisions of the Interstate Migrant Workman (RE&CS) Act and the Central Rules made thereunder.

As a result of these prosecutions employees started complying with the provisions of the Act and Rules. A good number of Principal employers obtained Certificate of Registration and a good number of contractors obtained Licences under Interstate Migrant Workman (RE&CS) Act, 1979. Besides, the employers started maintaining registers and other records as provided under the ‘Act’ and ‘Rules’. Employers have

become more aware of the welfare, safety and medical facilities to be provided to interstate migrant workmen. The CIRM officers are taking prompt action whenever there is a complaint received against any employers under the above Act and Rules. As the demand for interstate migrant workmen is increasing in the construction industry and stone quarries in Kerala, the officers are advised to give top priority to carry out inspections in these two sectors under Interstate Migrant Workman (RE&CS) Act, 1979 to mitigate the problems faced by these workers.

Besides, the Kochi region of CIRM gives special emphasis to conduct squad inspections known as ‘Crash Programme of Inspections’ and ‘Task Force of Inspections’ as per departmental instructions with a view to cover the uninspected establishments in the remote areas, particularly in the unorganized sector. The statistics show that these squad inspections render much relief to the migrant as well as local labours as the major thrust of these inspections are to ensure the payment of minimum wages, provision of welfare, safety and medical facilities to labours under different enactments including Interstate Migrant Workman (RE&CS) Act, 1979. Prompt, timely and result oriented actions by the CIRM officers of Cochin region have resulted in the interstate migrant workmen getting the benefits of the Act as visualized by the law makers.

■ The writer is Regional Labour Commissioner (Central), Kochi.

# Workers Welfare Ensured





# Chances get wings

## ODEPC paves the way

**G.L Muraleedharan**

The Overseas Development and Employment Promotion Consultants Ltd (ODEPC) was established in 1977 with an authorised Share Capital of Rs. one crore.

The main objective of the formation of ODEPC Ltd was to generate employment opportunities, ensuring the quality and reliability of the recruitment process that helps both Employer as well as Employees. Being a Government organization, ODEPC stands for its credibility and reputation among the clients as it ensures the genuineness of employers and the suitability of employees. It is perhaps the most dependable agency for the job aspirants as there is no chance of exploitation. Ever since its inception ODEPC was concentrating on foreign recruitment

and could safely deploy a number of candidates to various countries. The deployments made were mostly to Saudi Arabia, Sultanate of Oman, Qatar, UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, Libya, Muscat, Malaysia and Sri Lanka, Maldives etc.

During the past 29 years the major deployment was in the medical and para medical field and almost 90% of the candidates selected were from Kerala. ODEPC has been recognized as the only authorised recruiting agency from Kerala for the Ministry of Health, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

As part of diversification, ODEPC

has started an IATA approved Travel division in the year 1990. It has got travel arrangements with all major airlines. The air ticketing of all State Government officials and public sector companies is being done through ODEPC only.

**Objectives**

The main objective of ODEPC is to promote employment in foreign countries and in India by introducing the candidates to the job market. It also envisages to provide suitable guidance in Visa formalities, Labour laws and Travel regulations. It also helps in undertaking Air ticket bookings in

	Registration Fee	Renewal Fee
Professional (Doctors, Engineers etc)	Rs. 600/-	Rs.150/-
Skilled & Semiskilled (Nurses, ITI, Clerks, Technicians, Salesmen etc)	Rs. 250/-	Rs.70/-
Unskilled workers	Rs. 70/-	Rs. 30/-

Domestic and International Flights to the best satisfaction of the customers. ODEPC also aims to promote, establish and undertake joint industrial ventures abroad in collaboration with promoters with a view to increasing employment potential for Keralites abroad.

Raising financial resources from Indians abroad and other financial institutions for projects in India to promote, undertake, develop, establish, industrial, constructional and commercial activities also fall under the purview ODEPC. It also helps in promoting export of traditional and non-traditional items, handicrafts, handloom products etc.

### Registration

Those who desire to get an overseas assignment can register their names by paying a nominal registration fee. Application forms can be obtained from ODEPC office at Thiruvananthapuram by paying a fee of Rs. 30/- .In other districts, forms can be had from the District Labour offices by remitting a DD for Rs. 50/- drawn in favour of 'ODEPC', Thiruvananthapuram.

The registration fee fixed for different categories is as following the table.

Registration once done is valid for two years.

### Data Bank

The details of registered candidates are maintained in the data bank of the institution.

The data bank comprises of more than 22,000 registered candidates which include super speciality doctors, nurses, para medical personnel, Engineers, Technicians, Skilled, Semiskilled and unskilled workers and other categories.

When a foreign employer intimates the requirement, a list of suitable candidates will be prepared. In addition, press release and advertisements are given in the leading newspapers for specific job vacancies. Applications received in response to such advertisements and Biodata biodata taken from the data bank are forwarded to the employer for selection.

### Selection

After scrutiny the employer shortlists the candidate for interview and forward the list to ODEPC for arranging the same. Representatives or delegation of the

company visits India for the interview. The right of selection vests with the employer. The role of ODEPC is limited to providing facilitates for the interview.

### Deployment

After selection the deployment formalities like emigration clearance, attestation of certificates, visa stamping etc. are done by ODEPC quite efficiently and on time. Air ticketing of candidates is also undertaken by ODEPC Ltd.

ODEPC will start the recruitment procedure only after getting the Demand Letter and Power of Attorney duly attested by the Indian Mission of that country. After the interview the employer will forward the employment contract duly signed by him and the employee

will sign it here. A copy of the same will be given to the employee as well.

### Service Charge

ODEPC collects service charges as prescribed in Emigration Rules before deployment.



**The main objective of ODEPC is to promote employment in foreign countries and in India by introducing the candidates to the job market. It also envisages to provide suitable guidance in visa formalities, labour laws and travel regulations. It also helps in undertaking air ticket bookings in domestic and international flights to the best satisfaction of the customers.**

Unskilled	Rs. 2000/-
Semiskilled	Rs. 3000/-
Skilled	Rs. 5000/-
All other professionals	Rs. 10000/-

ODEPC has a voluntary Welfare Scheme in which candidates can make subscription. In certain cases the Employer would be prepared to meet the service charges. In such cases service charges will not be collected from the deployed candidates. ODEPC has an IATA approved Travel Division for ticket booking both domestic and international sectors. ■

The writer is General Manager, ODEPC.





R. Venugopal

It was nearly seven years ago, I had had a discussion about the caste system of India with noted sanskrit scholar and Ayurveda physician Chittattinkara N. Krishna Pilla. That conversation turned my perceptions about casteism topsy-turvy. Because, Krishna Pilla was endorsing casteism as what he described an inevitable reality! It opened up a new folder in the corner of my brain, quizzing the general concept on casteism.

What is caste? Is it inevitable? Is caste as of now is the caste as perceived in the past? Still Krishna Pilla persists that the caste and division as such it exist is entirely different from reality. Investigations and references thereafter led me to the advent of the Malayalam version of an ancient Tamil Ayurvedic book 'Malavakadam'. The book exemplifies the caste, birth-star, lifespan and Samadhi of ancient Yogis and Sidhas of Ayurveda. The content of the book is what Rishi Korakkar, one among the 18 Sidhas exhorted to Rishi Nagarjuna.

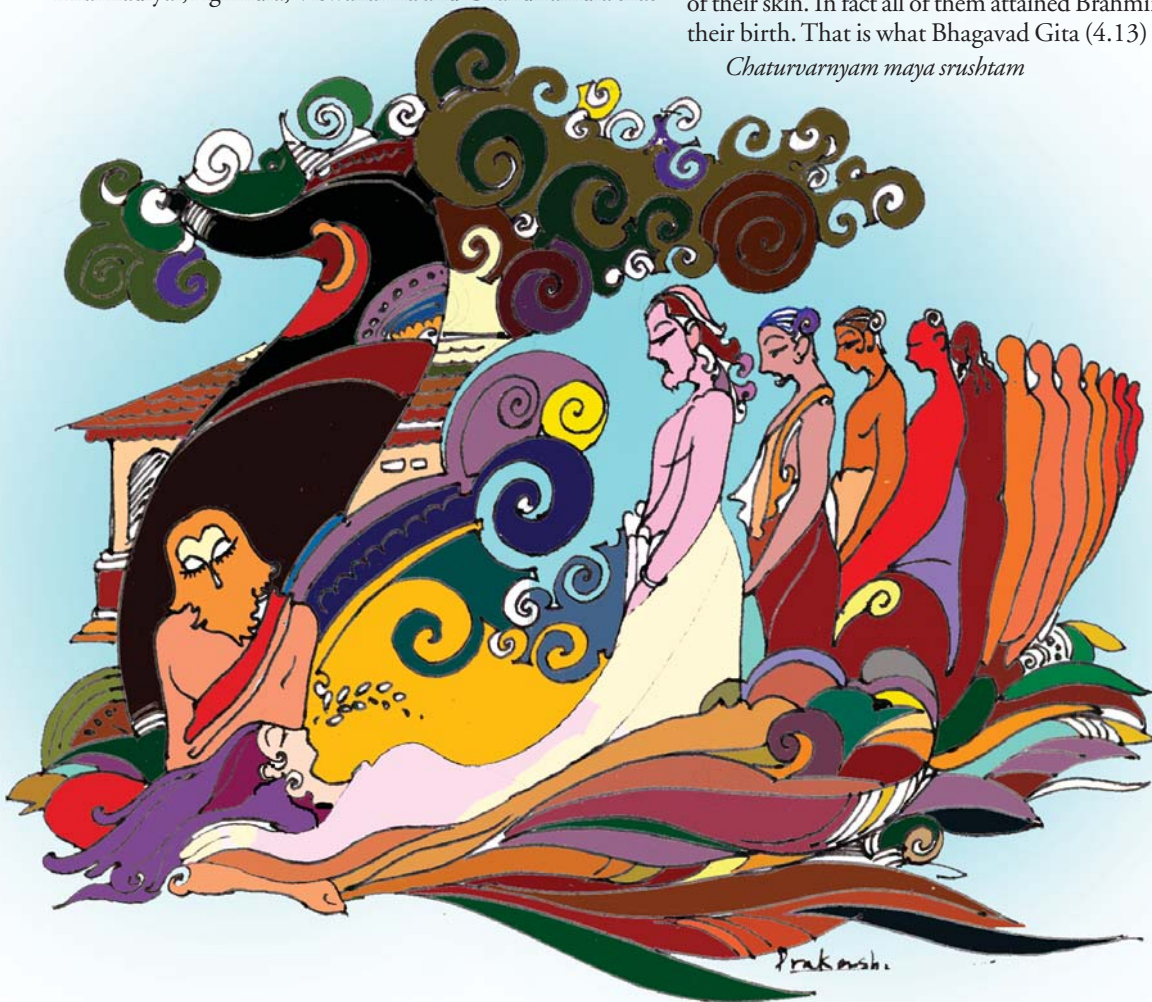
All the Sidhas and 45 other sages but for Dhanwanthary, the god of Ayurveda himself and Ramathevar, another sage who belong to Vishnukula, belong to the so-called inferior castes. Vishnukula is nothing, but Brahmin. They belong to Kuravar, Kallar, Mayan (blacksmith), Valaiveesu (fisherfolk), Yadavas, Marathiyar, Sinhalayar (Sinhalese), Shaivar, Vedar, Kowndar, Kurumbar, Shankarkula, Akamudayar, Pallan, Shoki, Kkannadiyar, Agnikula, Viswakarma and Chandirarkula that

# Not the Caste as it is

are considered inferior castes. It is established that Retnakaran, later known as Vatmiki, author of Ramayana was a Vedan (hunter). Sage Chemadagni spelt like Jemadagni, the father of king Ravana was depicted as Chinar, the Chinese. Saint Viswamithra was Kshathriya by birth. But, later attained Brahminhood through meditation (work). Narada, born to a Sudra became Devarshi. It is interesting to see Urvashi was also listed among the Sidhas. She was born in Adumai caste, means she was a slave by birth.

All these sages irrespective of their birth are being respected, dignified and even worshipped through ages. None of them was sidelined or neglected to oblivion on the basis of birth. Krishna Pilla says, it is their merit that count and not the colour of their skin. In fact all of them attained Brahminhood despite their birth. That is what Bhagavad Gita (4.13) says:

*Chaturvarnyam maya srushtam*



*Guna karma vibhagasha:  
Tasya kartharamapi maam  
Vidhya kartharamavyayam.*

Lord Krishna says, He made the four-tier division of caste on the basis of guna and karma. But guna is very well defined in Ayurveda as,

*Aiswaryasya samagrasya  
Veeryasya yashas-shriya  
Jnana vijnana yo schaiva  
Shannaam bhaga ittheethaam.*

Divinity, integrity, vigour, glory, virtue, wisdom and erudition are the factors that determine guna. It is the character in case of a person. But, in case of objects, guna is different.

*Guru manda hima snigdha  
Srushna mrudu sthiraka guna:*

Mass, condensation, temperature, humidity, density and stability are the factors that define the guna or property of a thing. The work undertaken is influenced by guna in case of a person whereas the chemical action in case of a thing or object. Thus the caste of a person can be perceived on the basis of karma and guna as defined by Gita. In fact the four-tier caste system is the by-product of this definition that roused flutters in Indian social life.

This is the point where Krishna Pilla interferes. Lord Krishna says, chaturvarnyam 'mayasrushtam' - I made the caste system. Krishna as an avatar of the Almighty, the 'I' he spelt might not be personified but resolute. It must be the overall depiction of universe itself. Krishna Pilla quotes upanisad, aham brahmasmi to substantiate his elaboration. Means, I am the Brahma. He says, chaturvarnya is part of Brahma. It is not the creation of man. Not even the creation of Brahma, but part of it. He cites Gita saying,

*Brahmana Kshatriya visaam  
Sudranaam cha param thapa  
Karmani pravi bhakthani  
Swabhava prabhavair gunai:* (18.41)

As said earlier, caste is determined by guna and karma based on which Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra are defined. The division of four castes is inevitable according to Pilla. But he underlines, the caste is not the one as exists. For example, see the definition of Brahmin:

*Shamo damasthapa: shoucham  
Kshanthirarjavameva cha  
Jnanam vijnanamasthikyam  
Brahma karma swabhavajam.* (18.42)

Serenity, self-control, purity, spirituality, forbearance, wisdom and ingeniousness are the qualities of Brahmin. Jnanam is material wisdom and Vijnanam is that of spiritual. In other words, anybody acquiring these qualities of higher level can become a Brahmin. Because, by birth everybody is only Sudra.

Similarly, Kshatriyan is one who is having the following qualities.

*Shouryam thejo dhruthir dakshtyam  
Yuddhe chopya palaayanam  
Daanam eswara bhavascha  
Kshaathram karma swabhavajam* (18.43)

Heroism, prowess, steadiness, incomppliance at the warfront,

largeheartedness, godliness and righteousness earmark the qualities of Kshatriyan.

*Krishi gowrakshya vanijyam  
Vaisyakarma swabhavajam  
Paricharyatmakam karma  
Sudrasypati swabhavajam* (18.44)

One who is engaged in trade, commerce and agriculture is a Vaisyan and one who serves others is a Sudra.

It is interesting to see that seemingly fifth category, Chandalas falls outside the domain of chaturvarnya.

*Satyam nasthi daya nasthi  
Nasthi cha indriya nigraham  
Sarvabhotha daya nasthi  
Ethatth Chandala lakshanam.*

Liars, cruel, those who have no consideration to fellow-beings and are bound to Indriya fall in this category. It is noteworthy that Chandala is not treated as a caste. Based on this definition, it is cynical to observe whether anybody, including the so-called Acharyas of all religions rises above the inferior domain of Chandala.

In all these definitions, caste is defined not on the basis of birth or colour of the skin but on the merit of one's qualities and work. Krishna Pilla explains that caste is a measure just like mother puts marks of identification to her children. Each child of a mother falls in different caste depending on varying gunas and karmas. The erudite are Brahmins; vigorous are Kshatriyas; labourers are Vaisyas and servants, the Sudras. Krishna Pilla cites the legend of Parayi petta Panthirukulam to substantiate his argument in which the Chandala mother gave birth to twelve children each belongs to each caste.

Not only men are classified according to guna and karma, but trees and snakes are also being spared. Ayurveda classifies trees into four and Vishavaidyam classifies snakes. The Hog weed, generally known as Thazhuthama (botanical name, Boerhaavia diffusa), a medicinal shrub has four varieties, says Krishna Pilla and hence his interpretation that caste system is natural.

So, he put the blame on the interpreters of Vedantha for this horrendous fallacy. They went after theory and what they saw around them but never went deep into what Lord Krishna had said and the science behind it. In the due course of history, the system has tilted upside down.

The concept of caste went into oblivion and the new inhuman system gained domination. The vulgarised version of casteism, remnants of which remains even today, was the mischievous manipulation of the theory and concept, he believes. Manu attained prominence sidelining Lord Krishna and Gita. Nearly whole of the populace were put to slavery and segregation. People were denied even minimum status of being humans. The system has rot worse than Apartheid in South Africa.

The preaching is crystal-clear in the Ayurveda scriptures. So Pilla believes Chaturvarnyam as the character of nature and part of creation. It is the multiplicity of creation. It is sheer genetics. ■

The writer is Assistant Editor, Information and Public Relations Department, Thiruvananthapuram.





PHOTOS : I&amp;PRD

promoting healthy industrial relations in the State. The Plantation Labour Committee (PLC) was the first such tripartite consultative machinery and the Industrial Relations Committee of the present stature, constituted with a view to protect the interests of the plantation industry. This Committee has been functioning uninterruptedly and constructively for the last fifty-one years. The decisions of the Committee since its inception will give a comprehensive outlook of the role it has played in the protection of the interests of more than five lakh workers (Around 15 lakh dependents) employed in this sector and the interests of the industry in general.

On the basis of the request made by



# Labour Relations Smooth and Strong

**V.Veerakumar**

“**W**e in the Department felt that many of the decisions of the Plantation Labour Committee will be of historical interest to future academicians and historians trying to figure out the elements that had made Industrial Relations in the State what it is today.”

These are the words expressed by

the then Labour Commissioner in the preface to the publication consolidating the decisions of the Plantation Labour Committee which is the prime and most creative tripartite Industrial Relations Committee functioning in the State since 1956.

Kerala is believed to be the first State in the Country where the concept of tripartite consultative mechanism first evolved some fifty years ago, in

the employers' and workers' organisations in the coir industry, the Travancore – Cochin government has appointed a Committee in 1936 to work out a solution for the issues prevailed in the industry and also to inquire into the labour related issues and suggest practical solutions for its development. This is considered to be the first attempt in the State in setting up a consultative committee in the industry to protect the



interests of the workers. The Committee has inter alia recommended government to constitute an 'Industrial Relations Council' for advising on the matters of bonus, wages, dearness allowances etc. This has paved the way for constituting a tripartite Industrial Relations Council under the Chairmanship of the Labour Commissioner in 1956. Subsequently the name 'Industrial Relations Council' has been changed as 'Industrial Relations Committee'.

The concept of tripartite consultation was also dealt within the ILO Convention concerning Tripartite Consultations to Promote the Implementation of the International Labour Standards, 1976 (Convention

The provisions of the Convention also envisage the role of the tripartite consultation, its procedure etc. The enactments like the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, The Working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955, Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 etc., also contain provisions for the constitution of tripartite consultative forums like the Advisory Boards, Technical Committees etc. for the effective implementation of the respective legislations.

The State Industrial Relations Board (SIRB), Industrial Relations Committees (IRCs) for various industries like Plantations, Coir, Cashew, Textiles, Motor Transport etc., and the statutory tripartite bodies like Advisory Boards / Technical Committees constituted / to be constituted under the provisions of

various enactments are the major tripartite consultative bodies functioning in the State for the protection of the interests of workers.

The State Industrial Relations Board (SIRB) headed by the Minister (Labour) is the present highest non-statutory Tripartite Forum in the State that decides high level policy matters on labour related issues in the Industrial sector.

The Industrial Relations Committee is also a non-statutory tripartite consultative body constituted with the representatives of employers' and employees' organisations of a particular industry. The Labour Commissioner will be the Chairman of the Committee. Around twenty IRCs effectively functioned in the State, which is believed to be the golden days of the Labour Department. Now, only six IRCs are functioning in the State and proposals are there in government for constituting a few more Committees. The Industrial Relations Committees had a major role in securing and maintaining healthy



Kerala is believed to be the first state in the country where the concept of tripartite consultative mechanism first evolved some fifty years ago, in promoting healthy industrial relations in the State. The Plantation Labour Committee (PLC) was the first such tripartite consultative machinery and the Industrial Relations Committee of the present stature, constituted with a view to protect the interests of the plantation industry.

No. 144), which was ratified by India in 1978. The term "representative organisations" in the Convention means the most representative organisations of employers and workers enjoying the right of freedom of association.



industrial relations in the State. Also, whenever situations so warranted these Committees had intervened and recommended amicable solutions for the redressal of the issues confronted in the respective industries. The constitution of the Enforcement Review Committee in Cashew industry with the involvement of the Departments like, Provident Fund, Employees State Insurance, Legal Metrology, Water Resources etc.,

Contd. on page 45



# Labour Front Opens Opportunities

**Gopakumar Karakonam**

**L**abour policy derives its philosophy and content from the Directive Principles of State Policy as laid down in the constitution. It has been evolving in response to the specific needs of the situation and to suit the requirements of planned economic development and Social justice. It is the product of tripartite consultations in which representatives of the working class, the employers and Government. Participations of the parties so vitally concerned and its aim is to promote co-operations between workers and employers in order to improve production and working conditions. The workers' participation in management becomes an integral part of the industrial relations.

The Labour Laws at present encompass areas like industrial disputes, wages and minimum wages, security measures like workmen's compensation Act, Equal Remuneration Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Child Labour Act, Factories Act, Mines Act, Contract Labour Act, Welfare Fund Related Acts etc. The basic objectives of the laws are to create a safe work environment, provide the mechanism and procedure to settle industrial disputes and ensure minimum wages, payment of provident fund, gratuity and bonus etc, besides other statutory benefits to workers. The intervention of the Labour Department and its Labour Officers are necessitated with a view to effectively protecting the interest of labour and maintaining harmonious relationship between labour and managements.

## Human Resource Management

The Industrial boom has significantly increased the importance of



**One should be qualified in order to manage huge workload in a fast-paced environment and have excellent verbal ability and written communication skills.**

Human Resource Management (HRM). The modern Corporate world uses HRM as an effective tool in Managing their routine business. HRM deals with key areas such as Industrial Relations, Human Resource Planning, Human Resource Development, Advanced Industrial Relations, Training and Development, Wage and Salary, Administration and Guidance & Counselling.

One should be qualified in order to manage huge workload in a fast-paced

environment and have excellent Verbal ability and written communication skills.

## Manpower Requirements

Manager (Human Resource), Human Resource Development Officer (HRD Officer), Labour Welfare Officer, Personnel Officer, Labour Relations Officer, Law Officer, Training Manager, Estate Officer etc are some of the positions required for Human Resource Management / Labour Welfare in the Industrial fields. Major functional areas of a Human Resource Manager include Human Resource Development/ Administration, Labour Relations. Services of a Labour Welfare Officer / Personnel Officer include implementing Labour Welfare Measures, Counselling, Advising Management on Welfare activities, Recreational & Health Initiatives. They are also responsible for labour relations including handling labour grievances, work place safety issues, emergency handling procedure, skills development.

Aspirants should obtain qualification like MBA (HRM) / MSW- Personnel Management & Industrial Relations / PG Diploma in Management with HRM / Industrial Relations / PG Diploma in Industrial Relation & Personnel Management/ LLB with Labour laws. For social works, it is better to specialise in Labour Welfare/ Industrial relations.

## HRM Study Facilities

There are different courses in the areas

Human Resource -Master of Human Resource and Organisational Development (MHROD), Master of Human Resource Management (MHRM), Post Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management (PGDHRM), Post Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Development (PGHDRD). Besides these, Human Resource Management (HRM) is one of the specialisation areas related to Master of Business Administration (MBA)/ PG Level Management Programmes.

The MHROD programme has been designed to cater to the growing needs of industry and business for professionally qualified young men and women in the areas of human resource and organisational development. It is a rare course. The Department of Commerce, Delhi School of Economics, under the University of Delhi is a prominent Centre offering MHROD, a two year fulltime professional programme. Graduates in any discipline with 50% marks in the aggregate (45% marks for SC/ST, PH) are eligible for admission. Selection is based on all India level Entrance Test, group discussion and personnel interviews. Intake – 40 seats. ([www.commerceds.edu.org](http://www.commerceds.edu.org))

In Kerala, the Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode, offers a Postgraduate programme in Management with HRM as one elective subject. Graduate in any discipline with 50% marks (45% for SC/ST/PH) are eligible for admission. Selection is based on IIM-CAT. ([www.iimk.ac.in](http://www.iimk.ac.in))

'HRM' specialisation is available in almost all business Schools/ University Departments/ Institutions in Kerala. Some of them are the following.

- Institute of Management in Kerala (IMK), University of Kerala, Palayam, Thiruvananthapuram – 695034.
- IMK Extension Centre, Institute of Cooperative Management, Poojappura, Thiruvananthapuram – 695012.
- IMK Extension Centre, Centre for Management Education Parakode, Adoor.
- IMK Extension Centre, University Study Centre, Alappuzha- 688003.

The above centres offer MBA with HRM as one of the specialisations. Graduates in any discipline with 50%

marks are eligible for admission. S

- The Department of Business Administration under the Government College of Engineering, Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram-695016 (MBA-HRM)
- The School of Management Studies, Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi-22 (MBA-HRM) ([www.cusat.ac.in](http://www.cusat.ac.in))
- Rajagiri School of Management, Kakkanad, Kochi- 682039 (affiliated to M.G. University) MBA, MHRM ([www.rajagiri.edu](http://www.rajagiri.edu))

Outside Kerala, the following Institutes offer PG programme in Management with HRM as specialisation.

- The Management Development Institute, Gurgaon-122001. ([www.mdi.edu](http://www.mdi.edu)). PG programme in HRM.
- Symbiosis Centre of Management and Human Resource Development, Pune ([www.sybiosis.ac.in](http://www.sybiosis.ac.in)) PG Programme in HRD.
- Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies Mumbai-400056 ([www.nmims.edu](http://www.nmims.edu)) MBA (Human Resource & Behavioural Sciences)
- The Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Deoner, Mumbai-88, ([www.tiss.edu](http://www.tiss.edu)) MA- HRM and Labour Relations.
- School of Management XLRI Jamshedpur - 831001 ([www.xlri.edu](http://www.xlri.edu)). PG-programme in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations.
- University Business School, Punjab University, Chandigarh- 160014., ([www.ubschandigarh.org](http://www.ubschandigarh.org)), MBA (HR).
- Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune-411004 ([www.sibm.edu](http://www.sibm.edu)) MBA, (HR)
- Anna University, Coimbatore-641013 ([www.annauniv.ac.in](http://www.annauniv.ac.in)) MBA (HR)

Most of the above institutes provide placement assistance either in the final year or after the successful completion of the programme.

The Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi-110068 also offers MBA and PG Diploma in HRM through distance education mode ([www.ignou.ac.in](http://www.ignou.ac.in)). ■



# Sadya

## the four square meal



### Dr Joe Thomas

In Kerala, Malayalis excitedly await the months of August and September to celebrate the festival of Onam. It is believed that the great king, Mahabali who was once vanquished by Vamana (an incarnation of Lord Vishnu) returns on this day to visit his people. Kathakali (an ancient Kerala dance form), Thiruvathira, Mohiniattam (traditional dances), Vallamkali (snake boat race), musical recitals and the Onam sadya (a traditional culinary feast) are the highlights of this season of merrymaking. A floral carpet in the courtyard called the Pookkalam and the Sadya are prepared by every home to welcome the great king.

The Onam sadya is an elaborate vegetarian meal served lavishly. It commemorates the magnificent rule of King Mahabali - a time of plentiful and when all were equal. Another reason to prepare such a feast is to impress upon the spirit of the King that his people are happy and wish him well. The culinary extravagance served upon a clean banana leaf, delights the senses with its varied colours, smell and taste. The main course is parboiled 'unpolished' rice. Seasonal vegetables such as pumpkin, yam, drumstick, cucumber and raw banana are used in combination with various lentils. Coconut is used in abundance, either fresh or roasted. Accompaniments include spicy pickles, crispy papadoms

and chips, curd based vegetable dishes and the traditional dessert called the payasam. In the days gone by, the Onam feast included 64 items - eight varieties of eight dishes. To accommodate all the dishes, three banana leaves were laid one below the other. Although today the number of dishes is reduced to ten to sixteen, the gastronomic experience is in no way compromised.

In a Kerala home this traditional meal is also served on festive occasions like

marriages, ground-breaking ceremonies, house-warming ceremonies, launches and birthdays.

Tradition has great bearing on a sadya and the ambience in which it is served. It determines the reception of the guest, their sitting arrangement, how the banana leaves will be positioned and the sequence in which the food will be served.





Onam brings together the extended families that travel to the family-home to attend in general merrymaking, fraternizing and renewal of family bonds. Early in the day, the men, women and children dress up in the traditional Kerala attire. A sadya that is served at lunchtime is the high point of the day where shyness and false egos take a backseat in the face of candid feasting and cheer. Everyone in the household has a role in preparing and laying out the sadya.

People sit down cross-legged on floor mats. This is the ideal position, as an erect back allows the smooth passage of the food into the digestive system. Once all are seated, the food is served on a distinctly laid banana leaf - the narrow end of the leaf points to the left of the diner. If the gathering is large, caterers are engaged to serve this elaborate meal, but in a home, this is the privilege of the womenfolk. On festive occasions, they are usually draped in the traditional white and bordered kasavu saris while the men wear the traditional white mundu.

The serving is done in a specific way

and each dish commands a specific position on the leaf. Salt is first served on the extreme left followed by the dry accompaniments like the upperi (banana chips), sarkara-puratti (fried banana cubes coated with jaggery) and pappadam (deep fried flour wafers) and pickles.

Pickle can also be replaced by sour dishes made from tender mangoes, gooseberries, limes etc. These are all on the left edge of the leaf. On the central and right edges are served the thoran (vegetable with coconut scrapings), the avial (assorted vegetables cooked in coconut cream), erissery (lentils and pumpkin in ground coconut), pachadi (cucumber in spiced yoghurt), puli-inji (spicy ginger and tamarind sauce). When this is done steaming hot rice is served in the centre of the leaf. Small portions of rice are eaten sequentially - first with parippu curry (lentils in ground coconut base) and a few drops of ghee, then with sambar (assorted vegetables in a tamarind based gravy). A third portion is eaten with the kaalan (vegetables with whipped yoghurt in a coconut base) and the olan (ash gourd curry with coconut milk). The

dishes on the side of the leaf are mixed into these mounds to make combinations of delectable mouthfuls. This concludes the main course of the meal and the dessert is served. The dessert consists of payasam /prathamam, which are porridges made of split green gram, rice paste, or banana with milk and sugar/jaggery (brown sugar). The payasam is served on the leaf itself, although these days it is customary to request for it in a glass. This heavy meal is ended with another helping of rice with which rasam (spicy soup) and sambaram (spicy, salted butter milk) are served. The meal is washed down with a glasse of chukku (dry ginger) water.

It is fascinating to review the sadya against a dietetics backdrop. There is food chemistry behind the use of ingredients and a scientific rationale in the serving sequence of this balanced meal. In Ayurveda there are six chemical constituents in the food and these are known as Shadrasas. In a sadya the shadrasas are harmoniously blended so that acidity and alkalinity are perfectly balanced. The proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals are optimally combined. The doshas are neutralised so that digestion is quicker. Malayalis can be proud of their knowledge of the food science that goes into the preparation of a sadya.

The major part of the meal is rice,



# Sweetie Payasam

Indu Narayanan

Keralites are once again in a jubilant mood, with the onset of Chingam, the first month of Malayalam Year, to celebrate the national festival, Onam. Wherever resides, Onam brings hope and nostalgia in the minds of Keralites all over the world. They celebrate this festival with all extravaganza like playing boat race, wearing colourful dresses and preparing tasty food. Preparation of Kerala style sadya deserves special mention because its preparation itself is a festival for a Malayali. While preparing sadya, payasam occupies an important role. Recipe of three types of Payasam has been described for this year's Onam.

## Vermicelli payasam

Ingredients: Vermicelli	one cup (broken into one inch long pieces)
Jaggery grated	3 cups
Coconut milk (first milk)	one cup
2nd milk	2 cups
Third milk	2 ¾ cups
Cardamom powder	one tablespoon
Kismis and cashewnuts	one tablespoon each
Ghee	one tablespoon



which is a good source of carbohydrates. The rice bran in the hulled rice is rich in Vitamin B. The vegetables in the sambar, avial and kalan; and the lentils and pulses in the erissery and parippu curry supply the protein and vitamins to the meal. Leafy vegetables provide the Vitamin A and iron. Spices like pepper, cumin seeds, and asafoetida have medicinal powers that reduce blood pressure and sugar level of the body. Ginger and tamarind in the rasam and the spicy buttermilk encourages the flow of digestive juices for digestion. The coconut milk in the olan and ground coconut in the erissery and kalan helps to restore the alkalinity levels in the digestive system. The banana leaf on which the sadya is served helps to check food reactions and production of harmful chemicals that could otherwise happen on a metal plate. It is also more hygienic as it is easily cleaned before a meal and disposed off after it.

Exploring the scientific or Ayurvedic aspects of a sadya helps to understand and further validate its intrinsic food value. The impact of this gourmet's delight is fully experienced as the assorted dishes are mixed in different combinations and eaten off with one's fingers. In the first course, a little rice is mixed together with parippu curry, crushed papadoms and a few drops of ghee. The curd based pachidi or kichidi are mixed into this rice portion making it a slightly sweet concoction. An empty stomach accumulates pitha (agni). The sweetness of this meal and the heavy ghee taste helps reduce the pitha and enhances the vatha.

Next the sambar is served on a small mound of rice and eaten with avial and thoran. Though the spicy sambar boosts the pitha, it is neutralised by the coconut-based dishes eaten with it and renders a cooling effect. This course of food can also help raise the level of digestive agni,

if the previous course had greatly reduced it.

Next the rice is eaten with a little kalan. This dish uses sour curd into which either cooked banana, pineapple or yam is added. This is eaten along with olan, which is steeped in thick coconut milk. Just like the previous course, this course helps to increase the digestive agni that aids in digestion; the kapha levels are now slightly raised.

The subsequent courses of rice eaten with rasam and spiced buttermilk will address the raised levels of kapha. Rasam is a thin spicy soup that contains ginger and pepper; the spiced buttermilk has ginger, green chillies and curry leaves. These help to rein in the kapha. The spicy pickles and preserves reduce kapha and aids digestion. It also helps to detoxify the system and relieve congestion.

Surprisingly the dessert is served mid meal - just after the kalan and olan. The heavy sweet taste of the payasam or



### Method

Melt jaggery. Sieve to remove sand and dirt in it. Cook sago and vermicelli with enough water. Add this to the jaggery syrup. Pour the third milk to this. Boil for two minutes and add the second milk. Stir for a while. Add the first milk and boil for two minutes. Fry kismis and nuts in ghee and

add to the payasam. Off the gas and sprinkle cardamom powder. Serve hot.

### Ada Pradhaman

Ready ada	100 gms (cooked in hot water)
Sago	25 gms (grated)
Jaggery	¼ kilo
Copra/coconut pieces	one tablespoon
Coconut milk (first milk)	one cup
Second milk	two cups
Third milk	three cups
Cardamom powder	one tablespoon
Cashew nuts and kismis	one tablespoon each

### Method

Cook ada and sago in hot water and sieve. Pour cold water to separate each ada. Melt and sieve the grated jaggery. Pour this to a heavy bottomed pan and add cooked ada and sago to this pan. Stir well. Pour third milk and boil. Add the second

milk and stir for a while before adding the first milk. When it starts drying, add kismis, nuts and copra fried in ghee. Sprinkle cardamom powder. Off the gas and serve hot.

### Pine Apple Pradhaman

Pineapple (chopped)	200 gms
Jaggery (grated)	four cups
Dryginger powder	¼ tablespoon
Cardamom powder	one tablespoon
Sago	25 gms
Ghee	two tablespoon
Coconut milk (first milk)	one cupse
Cond milk	two cups
3rd milk	three cups

### Method

Cook pine apple in enough water. Pour ghee in it and stir well. When this is mixed well, add jaggery. Let it dissolve well in little water. Add cooked sago. Stir frequently so that it does not stick each other. Add third milk, second milk and first milk respectively. Stir well. When it got mixed well, off the gas and sprinkle cardamom powder. Now the preparation is ready for use.



prathamam is welcome at this stage. It helps to revive the flagging digestive process from the onslaught of the raised pitha. Having the payasam at the end of the meal is customary these days, however this is considered unhealthy as it causes indigestion, flatulence and lethargy. That is why the rasam and the spicy buttermilk are eaten after the payasam or prathamam. The banana or jackfruit chips and sarkara-puratti are accompaniments with the sadya. A well-ripened plantain is eaten to end this meal. The chukku or jeera water served with the sadya helps to reduce thirst, flatulence and indigestion.

The sociological significance of the sadya is profound. In the yester years, the preparation of the sadya begins a year earlier, when the head of the family plants a banana sucker in the courtyard in anticipation of a mature bunch at Onam. The rice from paddy fields is collected, hulled carefully to retain the bran, dried

*The sociological significance of the sadya is profound. In the yester years, the preparation of the sadya began a year earlier, when the head of the family planted a banana sucker in the courtyard in anticipation of a mature bunch at Onam.*

and stored away. The finest vegetables in the fields are earmarked to be harvested for Onam.

The women take up the role of preparing the meal and then serving the

men and children lavishly. Then comes their turn to sit down together and enjoy the fruits of their labour, in an atmosphere of fun and light heartedness. The evenings are spent playing games and indulging in cultural events and lighting fireworks.

The sadya is also a validation of ones social standing. Even with the face of the current fast food culture, the appeal of a sumptuous sadya has not diminished. It is a must for all family occasions. The number of invitees and the elaborateness of the menu are indicative of the economic and social standing of the family. Today space and time limitations have compelled families to hire caterers to take care of the cuisine.

Nevertheless, when it comes to the issue of a traditional Kerala sadya, even today the old Malayalam saying holds good "Kaanam Vittum Onam Unnamam (enjoy the Onam feast even if you have to sell your possessions)". ■



# Festival of Plenty

**Mullakkara Ratnakaran**  
Minister for Agriculture

The black face of “Karkidakom” will vanish and the Rosy bright face of ‘Chingom’ will smile on us soon.

There are charming myths about the origins of Kerala- and of ‘ONAM’. As the tourism slogan says this is ‘Gods own Country’, a land strip of five hundred and seventy nine kilometres ups and downs of the Western Ghats. Ever green throughout the year, it is a Paradise of dense jungles, with many waterways flowing from its hills into the valleys, which also receive the sea waters in the shady lagoons making back waters, here, there and everywhere. The lush landscape uplifted throughout by tall elegant coconut palms, the ‘Kera Vrikshams’. The land carpeted by the greenery of Paddy fields struck the gaze of the visitors. The rich fruits of the earth created a unique Malayali way of living.

These are colourful nostalgic dreams. Today we witness reversals of the cherished treasures.

The greenery of our Paddy fields have shrunken and concrete monsters emerged where once rich bumper crops here

harvested by our farmers. Our waterways have dried up. Our forests became the cruel victims of greedy axes.

We cannot wait any more, we have no time to waste let us learn the lessons before it is too late. The paddy field is not a piece of mere land. It is the land that nurtured and nourished our culture and life style.

To regain the lost glory and regenerate the agricultural prosperity we have to protect our paddy fields from the tendency of fast dwindling paddy farming area in the state. We are taking several measures in its direction including a legislation to protect paddy fields. In order to make paddy cultivation profitable the government proposes to declare the main paddy areas of the state, Palakkad, Alapetty and Thrissur as protected paddy areas. Farmers in these areas will be provided green cards and for the first time in the country, these farmers will have the benefit of interest free loan.

Along with these activities of the government we have to build up a mass awareness to protect and promote the paddy cultivation. I earnestly request all Keralites to rally round the government in this massive effort.



During Onam the government used to organise vegetable fair-, in the main cities of the state. This time we are spreading this effort across the state by organising 1068 village Onam festivals. By this, the government is Dot only trying to extend its welfare measures to the rural areas, but also to establish our Krishi Bhavans as the key point of village life. This effort, I hope will revamp the agriculture economy and the agrarian culture of our people.

As we are all aware the farmers of Wayanad district were the victims of several maladies. During this Onam, We are trying to promise our grief stricken brothers of this district a light of a new life. We are adopting Wayanad district for a holistic upliftment of that area. We aim to provide all basic facilities for a comfortable life to the farming families of three villages, in the district.

The wishes and aspirations of the farming community are close to our heart, the problems and prospects are our first concern and the agonies and anguishes will be remedied. When the spirit of Onam dawns on us we imbibe the frustrations and fulfilments of the farmers of Kerala and bestow our best attention to bring in prosperity in plenty to them. ■



# SHOULDERING the Supreme

# Challenge



Pratibha Patil arrives for swearing in ceremony

Assembly has declared Gandhi Jayanti, the 2nd of October, as the International Day of Non-violence. We express our gratitude to the world community for this unique honour.

Ours is an ancient civilization but a young nation. We look back with pride to the tremendous achievements made during the 60 years of our independence in all spheres of life. More than anything else we have demonstrated to the world that a developing country of over a billion people, each aspiring for a better quality of life, can live harmoniously and move forward within the framework of a secular democracy.

As President I assure the people of India that in upholding the Constitution I will always be inspired by the stirring message of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar who, in his closing speech to the Constituent Assembly, emphasized the need to hold fast to the constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives. Sixty years ago, speaking in these very premises, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had said, and I quote, "Freedom and power bring responsibility." He reminded us that this great responsibility, I quote "rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign body

**R**espected Dr. Abdul Kalamji, Mr. Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Members of the Union Council of Ministers, Governors, Chief Ministers, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, Members of Parliament, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

My greetings to you all. I thank the Members of Parliament and State Legislatures for electing me to this high office. I am overwhelmed by the affection and regard shown to me by so many people across the length and breadth of the country during the past few weeks. I stand here today as the Republic's first servant, humbled by this experience.

It will be my sincere endeavour to live up to the high expectations of all those who have chosen to elect me, and to serve the best interests of the people of India. I am fully aware of the great responsibility that has been placed on my humble shoulders.

This year we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the First War of Indian Independence. As I stand before you, I draw inspiration from the courage and sacrifice of all those who led our nation to freedom. One of the unique features of our national movement, of our freedom struggle, was the equal participation of men and women. Among the many who led that battle against foreign rule were brave women like Rani Lakshmibai, Begum Hazrat Mahal and Kitturu Rani Chennamma.

In a few days time we will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of our independence. I would like to remember with gratitude the great contribution to our freedom struggle made by leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and Sarojini Naidu, who fought under the unique and path-breaking leadership of the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Therefore, I share the sense of pride of every Indian that the United Nations General



**IMPECCABLE:** The President of India, Pratibha Patil inspecting guard of honour



**"In a few days time we will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of our Independence. I would like to remember with gratitude the great contribution to our freedom struggle made by leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and Sarojini Naidu, who fought under the unique and path-breaking leadership of the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi."**

representing the sovereign people of India." Indira Gandhi as India's first and only woman Prime Minister, showed us that the upliftment of the underprivileged and alleviation of poverty must remain the foremost and sacred duty of those who hold public office.

Today India stands at the threshold of a new era of progress. The nation is moving at historically unprecedented rates of growth. It should be our combined endeavour to sustain this growth and ensure that it is socially inclusive. We must ensure that every section of our society – particularly the weak and the disadvantaged - are equal partners in, and beneficiaries of, the



development process. We must also ensure that every region of the country participates in and benefits from the process of economic growth.

I am reminded of the words of the great seventeenth century, Marathi poet-saint, Sant Tukaram, who said:

"One who befriends the poor and the oppressed, Recognise him to be a Saint, for God is with him"

Today, I commit myself to work for the well-being of all our citizens.

To realize the full potential of our people, we must invest in their capabilities and empower them with modern education and comprehensive health care. We must banish malnutrition, social evils infant mortality and female foeticide. I wish to express my full commitment to the protection of child rights. We must wage a relentless campaign against poverty, ignorance and disease to seek a better future for our children. We must show wisdom and foresight in protecting our planet and our environment, for the good of all living species and future generations.

I am deeply committed to the cause of education and would like to see every person, man and woman, boy and girl, be touched by the light of modern education. Empowerment of women is

particularly important to me as I believe this leads to the empowerment of the nation.

We must ensure that science and technology serve our needs better, and help us develop a scientific temper that will unleash the full potential of our people, of our farmers, our workers, our professionals and our entrepreneurs.

The people of our country desire better governance, faster development and a life of peace and security. We must all stand united in the fight against such divisive and destructive tendencies as communalism, casteism, extremism and terrorism.

The world has come to regard the success of social and economic development in India within the framework of a democracy as a symbol of hope for all humanity. As I think of the future of our great nation, and our duties and responsibilities in taking it forward, I am reminded of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's invocation about India awakening into that heaven of freedom where the mind is without fear and the head is held high. Let us all rededicate ourselves once again to our Constitutional ideals and work unitedly to build such an India.

Jai Hind! ■



# Koraga

## A. Ashokan

**K**oragas are the distinct primitive tribal groups (PTGs) inhabited in the northern tip of Kerala. Pre-agricultural stage of development, stagnant population and very low literacy rates are the basic attributes of the primitive tribes. Accordingly, there are five PTGs in Kerala viz, Cholanaikan, Kurumbas, Kattunaikans, Kaders, and the Koragas. Their hamlets and habitats are located in the less developed Malabar region. For historical and social reasons, the Koragas are found only in Kasaragod district, though they are concentrated in the neighbouring state of Karnataka. The literacy rate ranges from as low as a little more than eight percent for the Cholanaikans to as high as 50 percent for the Koragas. Higher literacy rates do not imply that the socio-economic status and the living environment of the Koragas are much ahead of other PTGs. In fact, the socio-economic lives of the Koragas are more miserable than other PTGs of Kerala or South India and remain socially and culturally isolated from the mainstream population. Most of the hamlets of other tribal communities are in remote areas or at difficult hilly terrains where the awareness and utilization of tribal schemes have been substantial.

### Deprived Koragas

The implementation of the tribal development programmes is not equally efficient across tribes. It is high time to have tribe and region specific schemes for their transition and overall development. This is mainly due to the failure to address the social, cultural and behavioural determinants within the broad profile and strategy of the Koraga welfare and development. Poverty, ill health and malnutrition are more rampant and widespread in the Koraga hamlets. The cut off value for defining poverty in rural India (Kerala) is Rs.375 monthly per capita, according to the Planning Commission (2001). If this norm is followed, 70 percent of the Koragas are living below the poverty line. It is significant to note that the average per capita consumption expenditure is estimated at Rs 376, which is at the cut off value margin. The per capita expenditure is as low as Rs 228 for the first fractile group (the poorest 10 percent) as against Rs 667 for the last fractile group (the richest 10 percent). On the other hand, the per capita expenditure of the Maratis (formerly ST community) is Rs



# Hamlets Testifies

465 and 50 percent of them are living below the poverty line. It shows that deprivation, poverty and hunger are severe in the Koraga hamlets.

The Koragas are liberal in spending on liquor and intoxicants, an important determinant of higher morbidity prevalence rates. On an average, the Koragas spend 25 percent of the total consumption expenditure on liquor, intoxicants, pan beedi, tobacco etc as against around 13 percent for the Maratis. The tribal consumption pattern is typical and it is not based on any pre-determined decisions but on the immediate mental makeup and the random choices of the head of the household or the earning member. Poverty and deprivation have increased the socio-economic misery of the primitive Koragas. It is true that many of the tribal development schemes yet to enter into their socio-cultural system. At the same time, the decline in the demand for the traditional baskets is mainly attributed to the non availability of creepers and other raw materials on the one hand and the emergence of synthetic substitutes on the other. As a result, it has compelled many Koraga families to search for alternative employment outlets as a survival strategy. During the lean period, particularly in June and July, their misery takes the form of hunger leading to ill health and starvation deaths! The most disappointing feature of the Koraga society is the increased TB prevalence rate. In the backdrop of increased morbidity prevalence rates, starvation and hunger, the monitoring system of tribal development schemes should be made more transparent, accountable and efficient. Continuous mobile health care visits to the hamlets shall create

confidence and increase the utilization of modern or Indian systems of medicine as a reliable healing option.

In a tribal economy, the functions and objectives of production are determined not by the dogmas or principles but by the bonds of kinship within or among the families or clans. Production is based mainly on the exploitation of the locally available resources. In the world dominated by technology and knowledge transition, their survival has become a difficult proposition. It is argued that, in the world of choices, competition between ends and means occurs not between those sub served only by subsistence activities, but between those sub served by subsistence activities and those sub served by other activities. This is the basic reason for the increased socio-economic divide between the under-privileged and excluded marginal communities and the (over) privileged mainstream population.

The forest policy has denied access to the minor forest produce like creepers and other raw materials essential for basket making. From a political economy viewpoint, the institutional and economic rationale of the capitalist mode of production has exerted an increasing influence and, of course, created deeper inroads, which are basically detrimental to the tribal interests. Environmental degradation and deforestation have severely restricted forest dependency. The tribes and the rural poor are not only experiencing social and economic deprivation but are devastated by the burden of diseases paralyzing their productivity and livelihoods. The living environments are very poor and unhygienic which increases

the prevalence and incidence of communicable diseases. Declining employment opportunities have led to competitive occupational transition from basket making to wage labour, laterite stone cutting, beedi rolling, etc. This transition process is not very smooth since, the cultural and ethnic factors act as the basic constraints on the demand for rural labour. They are low paid in the construction and other labour markets and discriminated according to ethnicity and gender. More than 75 percent of the Hindu Koragas still depend upon basket making as their main source of livelihood where as the corresponding proportion of the Christian Koragas is around 40 percent.

## Conclusion

Serious deprivations in many aspects of life have severely restricted their



development prospects. At the managerial level, it is argued that, the administrators must be more sensitive to tribal development schemes. At the policy level, the development programmes should integrate tribal (health) policy issues to improve their socio-economic status as a long term strategy for widening their development choices for inclusive growth and, in particular, improving their nutritional and health standards. ■

The writer is Lecturer (Economics), Nehru Arts & Science College, Kanhangad

# Save 10,00,000 BABIES

Initiation of breastfeeding within one hour of birth is the first and the most vital step towards reducing infant and under-five mortality, by reducing the overwhelmingly high neonatal mortality rate. Save one million babies – beginning with one action, one hour support and one message: begin breastfeeding within one hour of birth! August 1 to 7 is being observed as World Breast Feeding Week every year.

## Dr. Tessa Kurian

A recent study reveals that out of 10.9 million under-five deaths roughly four million babies die during the first month of life. In India, this means out of 11 lakh newborn deaths, 2,50,000 can be saved annually by breastfeeding them in time. It is with this motto that this year World Breastfeeding Week has selected the theme 'Breastfeeding: The first hour save one million babies'.

The objective of choosing this theme is to draw the world's attention to save ONE million babies beginning with just ONE action, just ONE hour of support and with just ONE message. Encourage 'breastfeeding within the 1st hour' considered as a key indicator of health progress by all communities, locally and globally.

Breastfeeding should be recognised as a basic need for survival of infants. The mothers who suckle their offspring within ONE hour after birth have a greater chance of successfully establishing and giving exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months keep the baby healthy and ensures development to the full potential.

Timely initiation of breastfeeding is beneficial for both the baby and the mother. Colostrum (also known as beestings or first milk) is a form of milk produced by the mammary glands in late pregnancy and the few days after giving birth. It is rich with carbohydrates, protein, and antibodies and contains low volume of fat. Newborns have very small digestive systems, and colostrum delivers its nutrients in a very concentrated low-volume form. It has a mild laxative effect, encouraging the passing of the baby's first stool. This clears excess bilirubin, a waste product of dead red blood cells, which is produced in large quantities at birth due to blood volume reduction, from the infant's body and helps prevent jaundice. Breastfeeding helps in the production of enough milk for the next





feed. It provides the skin-to-skin contact and warmth that babies need most, particularly premature and low birth weight babies.

### **Maternity entitlement protect young children's right to food**

The first six years of life are the most significant from the point of view of growth and development, and any damage done at this stage is irreversible. It has also been established that brain growth and development, or the establishment of neuron connections, is at its maximum during the first four years of life and these are likely to be seriously affected by malnutrition, especially in the first two years. Hence, proper nutritional inputs at this stage are essential to ensure optimal growth and development of children.

Early childhood can be considered in three stages, namely (a) birth to six months (b) six months to two years, and (c) two to six years. The food and nutrition needs of young children and protecting their right to food can be described as follows.

- Birth to six months: Exclusive

breastfeeding (WHO)

- Six months to two years: Supplementary feeding, which is adequate in quantity and frequency, and appropriate in quality along with continued breastfeeding
- Two to six years: Adequate quantities of healthy, safe, nutritious and pleasant food.

Estimates of child under-nutrition and mal-nutrition in the country also show that this is the most serious undernourished age group (national average of 46 % undernourished children below three (NFHS-3-2005-06)

### **Protecting Infant's Right to Breastfeed**

Breastmilk is the infant's only food for the first six months of life. So the only way to protect the child's right to breastfeed is to find ways for the child and mother to remain close together throughout the day and night. This is because the young child has to be fed frequently, and at regular intervals during the day, and also at night, implying that mothers who have to be absent for long period from their infants during the day in order to engage in economic activity will be unable to feed them adequately. One lasting solution to this is to provide maternity entitlements, which will allow the woman to absent herself from work for six months after the birth of a child without economic loss. Maternity entitlement protects both the woman (right to work) and the child (right to food).

### **BPNI and Celebrations of World Breastfeeding Week (WBW)**

This year BPNI plans to celebrate WBW by collecting information about the incorrect practices followed in breastfeeding and finding out solutions to them. Based on that, local MLA's and MP's are to be approached for resources to educate all health care providers, midwives and nurses to convey benefits of breastfeeding the first hour to women and families. The role of local media person, doctor, nurse, anganwadi worker, midwife and youth to support at least one mother for one week is also stressed.

### **Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative Programme**

As recommended by UNICEF, the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative

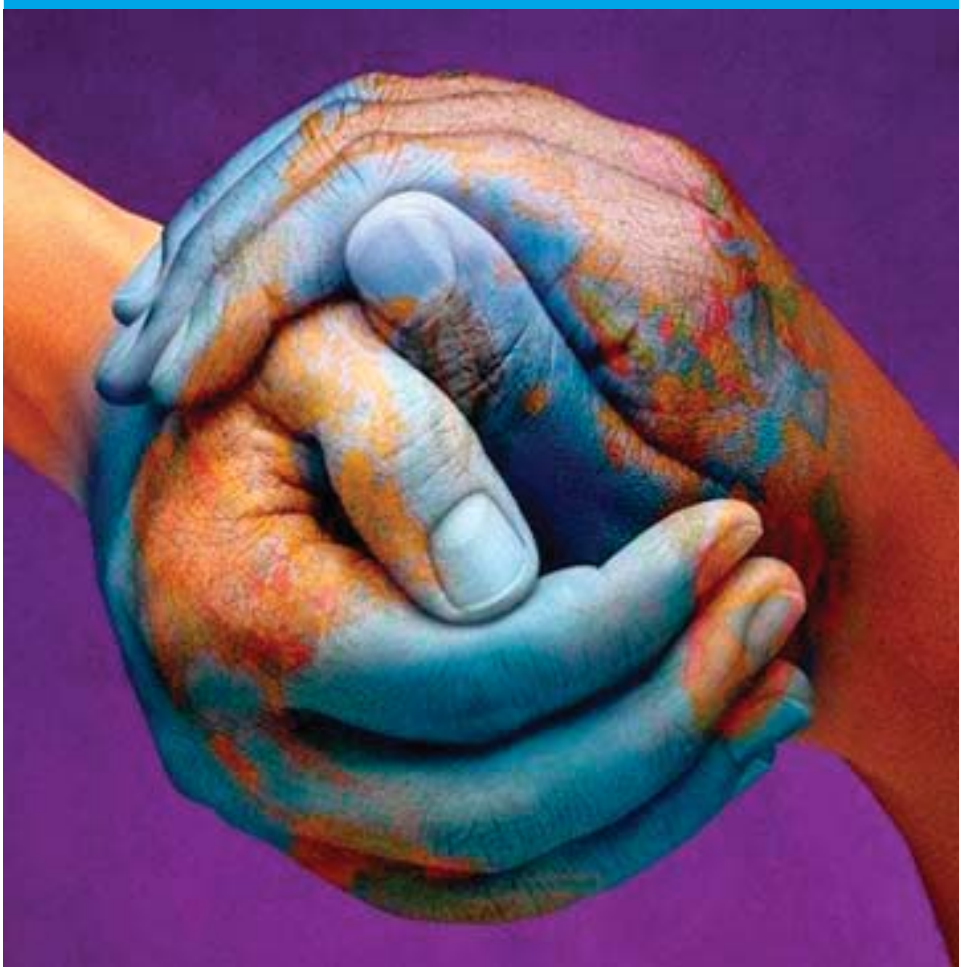
Programme was introduced in Kerala in 1992 as a measure to promote breastfeeding. Ernakulam was declared the first baby friendly district in the state. Feeding bottles, substitutes for mother's milk and formula feeds were banned as a part of this programme. Hospitals, health workers and the media popularised uniform policies regarding promotion of breastfeeding. Awareness campaigns were organized throughout the state. Kerala was crowned as the first Baby Friendly State in the world.

Female literacy is very high and infant mortality is very low in Kerala. Mothers are aware of the benefits of breastfeeding. But, the incorrect feeding practices like holding the baby wrongly while breastfeeding, frequent feeding leading to colic in infants, unscientific approach of grandmothers and care takers in infant feeding – all these are harmful to baby's

**Breastfeeding should be recognised as a basic need for survival of infants. The mothers who suckle their offspring within ONE hour after birth have a greater chance of successfully establishing and giving exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months keep the baby healthy and ensures development to the full potential.**

health. Young mothers should know the importance of colostrum in increasing the immunity of infants. Diarrhoea can be prevented by correct feeding practices. Doctors, health professionals and media can popularise proper feeding practices as a measure to save children from malnutrition. Just like provisions in the budget for 'Immunisation' programme, there must be budget provision for 'Breastfeeding' also. ■

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**Dr.K.S.Chandrasekar**

**G**lobalisation is not a new phenomenon. It has been going on for centuries. Perhaps, that is because the pace of globalisation has accelerated in the past century, and even more so, in the last decade. The end of the Cold War has made dialogue possible among nations and regions of the world that formerly viewed each other as enemies. Nations are working together to promote free trade, to punish genocide, and to protect the environment. The institutional, political, and social manifestations of globalisation are all around us.

The pace of institutional development at the international and global level has really been quite astounding. The list of global institutions keeps getting larger—the UN, the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO, the ILO, ILS... There are also a growing number of international laws and agreements regulating airplane travel, fishing activities, oil dumping at sea, how we fight wars, protection of the ozone layer, and the list goes on. Considering the rapid pace of change around us it is good for us to step back and ask what globalisation means for the world community, for individual nations,

# VIEWING Consumer Oriented





specific regions, and even for you and me as individuals. Societies are slow to accept change. If they do not accept an international agreement, then it will also be difficult to enforce compliance. On the other hand, there may also be times when we should work to hasten the development of global agreements or norms— such as those, which protect our planet from harm.

Many see globalisation—the spread of a global culture, the strengthening of Financial and Economic interdependence, and the diffusion of knowledge, technology, and norms—as positive for society and the environment. According to this logic, globalisation brings people and cultures closer together. We can now easily travel long distances in a short amount of time and be in different cultures. As the world becomes smaller we can work together, play together, learn from each other, teach each other. Globalisation makes far away places seem less strange, less exotic. It gives us common points of reference. It reduces inefficiencies. It promotes interdependence. It is a positive development that we should encourage. It will remove the artificial boundaries established by the nation state and allow local cultures to flourish. It will tie societies together - thus, reducing the potential for conflict among peoples. The economic development - which can be enhanced by globalisation - will improve economic conditions and that this will reduce human suffering, pollution, and environmental degradation.

Globalisation is not benefiting all groups equally. Rather, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. When two billion people live in abject poverty in the world, they argue, it is hard to talk of the benefits of globalisation. It is a fallacy to talk about the improving quality of life. The spread of AIDS is a problem that we have failed to overcome. The growth in wealth and consumption has led to growing dependence on the automobile, use of air travel, and appliances requiring energy is contributing to global climate change.

With globalisation of consumer lifestyles, consumption levels are increasing both in the rich countries and in the transition states. This adds yet more

pressures to the global environment, as more people are able to heat their homes, enjoy refrigerators, or ride motor scooters or cars. The globalisation of consumer cultures may improve the quality of life, but at what expense to the global environment? There are many valid concerns that can be raised about globalisation and what it means for labour, health, and the environment. There is an argument that global institutions like the IMF or the World Bank must be more transparent and must give a place to citizens groups. They are arguing that we cannot simply promote free trade and assume that this will benefit the environment in the long run. The short term cost to the environment might be too high.

We are rapidly developing new international and global economic, financial, and political Institutions. Globalisation hence will continue and that global institutions will become increasingly powerful. Thus, there is a need to think about those institutions and how their actions affect societies,

environmental protection globally.

Globalisation has indeed brought in its wake a greater choice of products and brands, has lowered costs in many areas, and increased quality consciousness among consumers. It has, in short, urged consumers to become more demanding, which is but a short step to becoming conscious of their rights as consumers. Indian consumer protection laws, such as the Indian Consumer Protection Act of 1956, compare with the best in the world but these are only as effective as the levels of awareness of these laws among consumers. Consumer courts may be crowded but only a miniscule proportion of aggrieved consumers actually take recourse to these, given the constraints of their awareness of the law and the platforms available for reparation.

There has been a remarkable change in the way MNC's have transformed to the requirements in India. Indians are no longer fascinated by 'world-class' products Coke, Pepsi, Ford, Suzuki, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, MTV, Star TV, Citibank, (and many more), have had

**As the world becomes smaller we can work together, play together, learn from each other, teach each other. Globalisation makes far away places seem less strange, less exotic. It gives us common points of reference. It reduces inefficiencies. It promotes interdependence. It is a positive development that we should encourage.**

economies, politics, and the environment - for good or bad. This is something that the anti-globalisation protestors are forcing us to do. In the absence of a global government, citizens' groups and the press can be even more important than they are in national systems. They provide one of the only checks on the actions of global corporations, international institutions, or powerful nation states.

NGOs can help monitor the activities of global corporations and thereby help protect the environment. They can pressure governments to do more to make an international agreement work out. They can share information, build networks, help to educate, and otherwise work together to protect the environment. To a very large extent, this is one of the most positive developments in terms of enhancing the potential for

the most visible impact on the average Indian's lifestyle. The changes brought forward by the globalisation include - MTV now blares Indipop, Pizza Hut and Domino's now serve Tandoori and Chettinad toppings, Swarovski crystals are studded on silk sarees, Citibank Suvidha is designed to facilitate the average Indian and no, Kellogg's has not replaced the aloo-paratha, idli-sambhar breakfast habit.

One of the first groups to realise the benefits of localisation was the advertising community. Why else would you have Aamir Khan (in North India), Vijay (in Tamil Nadu), Jyothika (in Andhra Pradesh) and Aishwarya Rai (rest of India) endorsing the same product (Coca-Cola) in different regions? This phenomenon has affected the Indian movie and music industry too. At a recent workshop on theatre and production,



well-known South Indian filmmaker Rajeev Menon categorically stated that the Indian film industry survives on a diet of songs and dance. Take these ingredients away from a film and you'll have empty theatres on your hands. Even Cartoon Network has plans of localising its programmes to entertain the Indian child. For instance, just before Holi, cartoon characters playing with colours are shown on the Network and contests with pichkaris as prizes are announced. And cartoon characters wishing Aamir Khan just before the Oscars made into huge hoardings.

But the most obvious impact that Indians have had on globalisation is in the food sector. Pizza Hut, McDonald's, Domino's..., all realised that when it comes to food, you have to bow to Indian culture. Maggi too went the same way. Noodles were all right for dinner once in a while, but to really mass market it as a snack, Maggi had to have the chatpatta Indian taste. And so the curry flavours, the tomato flavour, etc. Westernwear, now a slowly accepted concept among Indian workingwomen, also had to incorporate some 'desi' styles in order to appeal to the urban Indian women. It works both ways. While the Indians are more receptive to change, the companies themselves have learnt to enter this ancient land with due respect to its tastes and preferences. Cultural globalisation has created a robust appetite among consumers to experiment with international brands.

Consumers are now aware of the international brands and what they stand for. Indian consumer is no different from international consumers and would definitely take time to understand and adapt to a new concept. However, it's interesting to note that Indian consumers show the maturity of not following international trends blindly and do take into consideration what suits the Indian climate, skin, attitude, etc. After Ford introduced Escort in India, the company soon realised that rather than being enamoured by a foreign brand, Indians looked for international quality, but functions that suit Indian conditions. Ikon remedied the situation and has been accepted by Indians as an 'international quality Indian car. As a global courier company, FedEx appreciates cultural differences across the world and considers

them to offer high-level service to our customers worldwide. Apart from this, in India, Fedex introduced 10 kg and 25-kg boxes, as there existed a user need for such packaging for goods/documents being shipped out of India. Another interesting behaviour that the Indian consumer is demonstrating is the cross-category service comparison. For instance, a customer used to a particular level of service by his banker expects the same level of service from his airline or the telecom company whose services he uses.

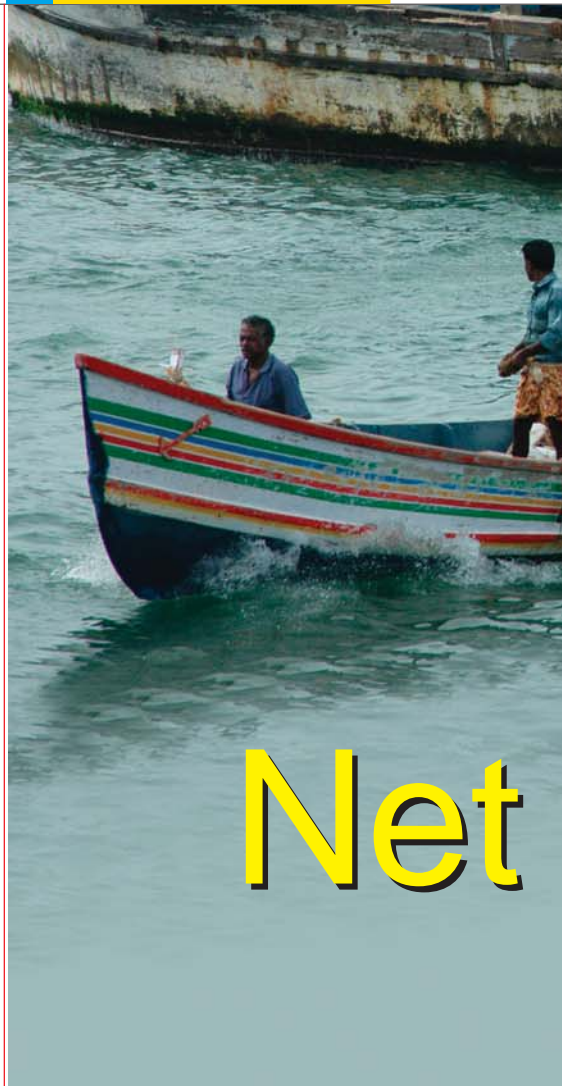
Kerala is arguably the earliest and most globalised of Indian States. It has a long history of commercial and cultural contact with the outside world. Long before 'globalisation' became a fashionable word, Arab, Chinese, Greek and Roman traders sought out Kerala for spices. And culturally, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism and Judaism have influenced Kerala.

Many of the most visible cultural expressions of globalisation, such as Coca-Cola and McDonald's, are American. But consider the growing examples of 'reverse colonisation', where non-Western countries influence developments in the West. Whether it is the curry revolution in London, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* winning the Booker Prize, Bajaj auto rickshaws in Indonesia or globally-oriented high-tech companies from Bangalore filling up orders for Western consumers, globalisation works both ways.

Keralites working in the Gulf know that well, having converted many of the streets there into mini-Keralas. Compared to other Third World States, from the point of view of social development and civil liberties, Kerala is well placed to 'handle' or 'absorb' globalisation. . But Kerala, with its hoary tradition of public action, social mobilisation and State capacity building, can cope with these pulls and pushes.

Globalisation will impact our environment in powerful ways and in turn, how we treat the environment along with the Consumer rights in the long term, will help shape what kind of world we live in. ■

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# Net

Dr K.S. Purushan

**A**mong the Indian states, Kerala stands unique in possessing various types of fertile aquatic habitats. However, these entities are capable of generating diversified groups of floral and faunal assemblages having immeasurable fishery significance. The bio-diversity components of these resources are not only very rich, but perpetually derive a variety of edible groups of algae, seaweeds, echinoderms, crustaceans, molluscs and fin fishes serving humankind ever time. While a section of the population mainly depends on this aquatic wealth for their avocation and livelihood, it also contributes very much towards partially solving the problem of food security of the masses. In short, such kind of nature's bounties and its blessings are instrumental to elevate Kerala in the forefront of Indian fisheries both in terms





These estuarine water bodies are highly productive and support good fisheries. Along with partial utilisation of water resources for many a purpose and other activities from time immemorial, its varied fishery wealth is also tapped to a major extent. Adjoining the 590 km long coast line there are 26,000 ha saline paddy (pokkali) fields and a wide continental shelf encompassing 39,139 km<sup>2</sup> included in the aquatic resource map of Kerala.

### Fishery resource potential

Kerala an enticing piece of nature's fabric and blessed with an extremely rich bio-diversity of shrimp and fish fauna in its water bodies remains with an immense potential for cheap protein resource tapping. Against an estimate of about 7.5 lakh tapable marine fishery resource, approximately 5.5-6.0 lakh tonnes/annum at an average are caught by all means during the last five years with more or less negligible fluctuations. At the same time, only around 75-80,000 tonnes are produced from inland waters. Available data indicates that further production increase from marine sources will be marginal and negligible irrespective of any method of tapping employed while at the same time, there is unlimited scope to reap palatable fishes from inland water bodies. Therefore, it is expedient on our part to take advantage of the fishery wealth of wetlands in a rational manner.

### Indigenous Fish fauna

In the fresh water realm about 210 fish species are found in the inland water bodies of which 53 are exclusively endemic. The indigenous food fish groups available are Tooli (*Labeo dussumieri*), Kuyil (*Tor khudree malabaricus*), Vala (*Wallago attu*), Varal (*Channa marulius* and *C. striatus*), Karoop (*Anabas testudineus*), Manjakoore (*Mystus seenghala*), Mushi (*Heteropneustes fossilis*), Wayanad Mushi (*Silurus wynadensis*), Kari (*Clarias bastrachus*), Aaral (*Mastasembalus armatus*), Kuruva (*Puntius spp*), Kolan (*Belone sp*), Poolan (*Glossogobius giuris*), Pachilavetti (*Barbodes carnaticus*) and Karimeen (*Etrophus suratensis*) in addition to the notable giant fresh water prawn *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*. However, on account of improper management of our water bodies, the

# Novel Techniques

of production and per capita consumption, as well. In such context, it will be interesting to make a peep into the scenario prevailing in the geographical features of Kerala from where the renewable source of bio-energy is unfailingly attainable.

### Aquatic ecosystems

Kerala is endowed with three distinct ecological realms having features and properties of fresh, brackish and marine resources. The total area of rivers is 85,000 ha. Besides there are 34 reservoirs having an area of 29,659 ha in addition to 3,300 ha ponds and tanks. Of course, they all bestow rich floral and faunal assemblages including fisheries and bird fauna. The coastal wetland covers an area of 3313 km<sup>2</sup> with a reticulate system of backwaters and canals. The backwaters, estuaries and lagoons such as Ashtamudi, Vembanad, Korapuzha etc numbering about 32 comprise an area of 550 km<sup>2</sup>.



stock of the above fishes is in a state of depletion, the annual realisation being awfully low. Even today, the average yield in the managed reservoirs is 23.38 kg/ha while it is only 5 kg/ha in the total reservoirs area in the State. Owing to low nutrient build up, the standing crop of plankton remains extremely poor resulting in low fish production. Idukki is passing through a tropic depression as evidenced by low rate of colonisation of biotic communities and the retarded growth rate of *Oreochromis mossambicus* is attributed to this phenomenon. The irrigation reservoirs in mid land location in the State being shallow and spread over rich alluvial soils with high nutrient loading from allachthonous sources, its high primary productivity may be conducive for fish production.

### Ornamental fish

Streams and rivers of Kerala are also the 'gold mines' of several ornamental fish species such as *Puntius denisonii*, *P. arulius*, *P. jerdoni*, *Barilius bakeri*, *Tetodon travencoricus*, *Mesonemachielus triangularis*, *M. guentheri*, *Oreonectes keralensis* and *Pristolepis marginata*.

### Estuarine fish fauna

The bio-diversity component of estuarine fish fauna comprises about 150 species. However, owing to the man made interventions such as barrage construction and bunding in the backwater systems, there is considerable reduction in the migration of prawn and fish faunal population now-a-days. This has drastically affected the fishery of giant freshwater prawn *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*. The annual catch of this species during the pre-barrage days was as high as 429 tonnes, which dwindled to less than 30 tonnes during 1990s. The depleting trend of inland fish production has already been indicated. The important food fishes available are Milk fish (*Chanos chanos*), Thirutha (*Mugil cephalus*), Kanampu (*Mullet sp*) and Karimeen (*Etroplus suratensis*). Eco-friendly sound technologies are also available to polyculture these species obtaining a production of 2.5-3.0 tonnes/ha/yr.

The predatory species such as Kalanchi (*Lates calcarifer*) & Chempalli (*Lutjanus sp*) are also obtained to some extent. While fair quantity of *Gerrus filamentosis* is captured, catfishes are at



times available in plenty. Though an exotic species, *Oreochromis mossambicus* (*Tilapia*) has conquered almost all the wetland systems in recent years yielding substantial quantities. Appropriate combination of biculture between *Lates calcarifer* and *O. mossambicus* in 1:8, 1:10 can result in a yield of 2-3 tonne/ha/yr.

Among shrimps *Thelly* (*Metapenaeus dobsoni*) & *Chooden* (*M. monoceros*) dominate in catches. However, the most important shrimp *Penaeus indicus* (*Naren*) is captured in fairly good quantities against the low availability of *Penaeus monodon* (*Kara*) in wild systems. However, all the four species are grown in traditional paddy-cum-shrimp filtration systems during summer months. With the advent of scientific shrimp farming technologies, *P. monodon* and *P. indicus* are farmed in grow-outs on commercial lines resorting to different levels of farming and yields of 2-3 tonnes/ha are obtained.

The other most important item captured from the estuarine waters is the crab fauna. The important species are mud crab (*Scylla serrata*) and *Scylla tranquebarica*. The pelagic crab *Portunus pelagicus* is also caught at times in the estuarine regions depending upon the saline gradients.

### Integrated farming

The organic paddy pokkali and

shrimp raising alternating with season is a typical example of integrated farming in saline coastal fields in Kerala. It is complementary that this singular method, which has been passed down from generation to generation relies on the symbiotic nature of paddy and shrimp.

Occurrence of extensive paddy fields is a unique entity in the productive coastal wetland ecosystem that supports a very good fishery resource also. The rational exploitation of shrimps, fishes and other crops of this ecosystem plays a significant role in addressing the problem of livelihood security of a large section of the masses. It can also ensure food security and poverty alleviation amongst the rural folk living along the coast. However, the warning of scientists on the further rise in sea level and associated flooding likely to threaten coastal areas due to the impact of climatic changes might also be viewed very seriously.

Suitable integration of fish farming along with agriculture and animal husbandry practices aiming to maximise production of edible fish crops and animal products from unit area is also successfully undertaken in homesteads of coastal wetlands. Pond-bund systems can be efficiently utilised for growing chosen varieties of fish-paddy-coconuts-vegetables in combination with duckery or piggery depending on the conditions.





In this type of bio-system management the waste from each system is suitably planned and directed to find an application in other systems beneficial to one another. If properly planned and adapted, this type of farming technique will have tremendous roles to play in the widespread homestead situations prevailing in the State.

### Mangrove associated fisheries

From a fishery viewpoint, the other most important fertile wetland ecosystem to be considered is that of mangroves. They are mostly seaward vegetations such as *Rhizophora* sp, *Bruguiera* sp, *Sonneratia* sp, *Avicennia* sp and *Exoecaria* sp which dominate among other genera and species. Characteristically enough, a variety of faunal groups also originate depending exclusively on this particular habitat. Thus an ecologically distinct and environmentally adaptable flora and fauna co-exist in perfect harmony in such swampy ecosystems.

The significance of mangroves on the maintenance of coastal belt, prevention of soil erosion and their role in organic food cycle leading to shrimp and fish production are clearly understood. The notable mangrove regions are known to exist in the south-east Asian countries such as Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. In India, certain regions of Sunderbans, Bitarkanika, Pichavaram isolated locations of Vembanad lake, Cochin and Kannur where mangrove vegetation generally seen established for decades are unique for their dominance in fish production. The mangrove vegetations at Utter Kannada, Andhra Pradesh and Mandovi-Zuari estuarine complex also show similar pattern in fish seed recruitment and production. Therefore, it is gathered that most of the fish and shrimp specie such as *C. chanos*, *M. cephalus*, Mulletts, Pearl spot, *P. monodon*, *P. indicus*, *M. dobsoni*, *M. monoceros* and *Scylla serrata* which support lucrative capture and culture fishery of our brackish waters make use of these regions to complete their

biological cycle. No doubt, the conducive environment provided by the natural nursery areas are said to play a vital role for the sustenance of good fishery in these regions.

### Clams and Oysters

Clams like *Meretrix* sp and *Villorita* sp are available in substantial quantities from our inland water bodies. In addition, edible oyster *Crassostrea madrasensis* is also captured from sub-tidal and inter-tidal encrustations of the backwater systems. Considering their food value, they are also generated on floating rafts and cages in conducive environments very easily. The technique is to efficiently tap the profuse diatoms and algae carried along the currents in the form of palatable and cheap molluscan flesh adequately utilising the three dimensional growth facilities in rafts.

The aquatic ecosystem occurring in diversified environments and habitats are supporting a very good fishery potential in our state. Harnessing such a bio-energy resource towards solving the problems of food security seems to be the most important aspect to be taken care of.

**The aquatic resource potential of Kerala is immense and enormous. However, its inherent wealth in the form of aquatic edible components is not yet optimally exploited owing to many a reason. Although the voluminous scientific data and technologies available vehemently advocate better scope and prospects for reaping the good from aquatic ecosystems, there are limitations towards attaining fish production at predicated levels.**

However, we are passing through an era of environmental degradation resulting from large scale reclamation of wetlands and unscrupulous methods of waste disposal as well, without having any proper remedial measures. Consequently, its ill effects are widespread, more often

becoming great havoc to the aquatic medium which continue to hamper the bio-resources including fisheries. This situation is quite alarming and is a matter of concern especially to Kerala wherein different kinds of water resources manifest as a blessing to humanity from ancient times. In the context of the prevailing concepts, the question has arisen on how long are we able to take advantage of 'natures bounties' unless and until its menaces are placed under check and control. Thus, it becomes imperative that an integrated coastal management process must consider all relevant practices in a given locale—typically including fisheries, aquaculture, agriculture, forestry, tourism and such other enterprises giving due regard to the needs and aspirations of the communities affected. It follows that multilevel thinking and pragmatic measures need be adopted to sustainably derive delicious aquatic items from the fertile wetlands. Such a planned approach and attitude towards managing coastal aquatic ecosystems alone would make them function as perpetual sources of fish production for the posterity.

The aquatic resource potential of Kerala is immense and enormous. However, its inherent wealth in the form of aquatic edible components is not yet optimally exploited owing to many a reason. The voluminous scientific data and technologies available although vehemently advocate better scope and prospects for reaping the good from aquatic ecosystems, there are limitations towards attaining fish production at predicated levels. These lacunae are to be overcome resorting novel approaches and deploying accurate remote sensing tools. Thus the situation demands evolution of environmentally sound technologies, which are economically viable and socially acceptable in order to ensure livelihood of the fisherfolk and food security of the protein starved populace sustainably from the gifted aquatic realms. Besides, it will also have a cascading effect on speeding up rural progress and overall development. No doubt, the emerging scenario clearly indicates the urgent need to adopt such kind of transformations for the continued satisfaction of human kind. ■

The writer is Associate Professor and Head, Fisheries tation, Pudukkottai, Kochi

# Tongue Multilingual

B. Harikumar

Like myriads of other paradoxes, the spoken language of Kerala is also a bone of contention for many. The southern Keralites are harshly attacked by the Malabaris for their accent. The Malabaris are attacked for their use of slang and so on and so forth. Volumes have been written for establishing the supremacy of Valluvanadan, Onattukara or Thekkan dialects. Cinemas, comedy shows etc. all market this weakness of Malayali. But what is the truth?

Apart from the dialectical variations of Malayalam, this tiny state with 32 million people is home to more than 40 distinctive languages! Many of them have their own script also. From the tribal language Allar to the internationally known Judeo-Malayalam, the Indianised Jewish language, the facts show that some of these languages are fast growing despite no organisational help, like Yerukula or Korava.

These languages usually come under the language category Dravidian, the prominent ones being Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Brahui. For the same reason, they will tend to have lexical similarity with this Dravidian group of languages.

Ernakulam district stands first with nine tribal languages just above Kannur,

which has eight. Moreover, Ernakulam has a few foreign language collaborations also. The tribal languages in use in Ernakulam are Kadar, Kanikkaran, Malapandaram, Malaryan – popularly known as Malayarayan, Malavedan, Muthuvan, Paliyan and Vishavan. Apart

from these, Kachchi, an Indo-Aryan language with Devanagari script close to Sindhi has natal speakers in Kochi.

The main tribal languages spoken in Kannur are Kodagu meaning 'situated to the west', Koraga (Korava), Mudu Koraga, Paniya, Kurichiya, Mullu





Kurumba, Muthuvas and Ravula. Of these the Kurichya language (ISO 639-3 kfh), also spoken in Wayanad and Kozhicode districts, is endangered as speakers are shifting to Malayalam in Kerala and Kannada in Karnataka.

Though known as tribal district, Wayanad has only five tribal languages, namely, Kurichiya, Betta Kurumba (Hill shepherds), Jennu Kurumba (Honey shepherds), Pariya and Ravula. Among these, Betta Kurumba, the natal tongue of 32,000 (2003 census), shows favourable attitude towards literacy and has grammar of its own. (ISO 639 –3 xub)

Another tribal district Idukki has seven languages namely, Malaryan, Malavedan, Mannan (no relation to the Mannan-washer man caste), Muthuvan, Paliyan, Urali and Yerukula. Malavedan – a nomadic language, spoken in Ernakulam, Kottayam, Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram districts also, is replaced by Malayalam in Idukki.

The neighbouring Kottayam speaks in Malankuravan, Malapandaran, Malaryan, Malavedan, Muthuvan, Paliyan and Vishavan languages. Whereas Alappuzha stands out with no such languages manageable to its tongue.

The capital district has only three distinctive languages apart from Malayalam, namely Kanikkaran, Malankuravan and Malavedan. The same languages are shared by Kollam also. Pathanamthitta has just two – Malankuravan and Malapandaram.

Bellari, Kodagu, Konkani, Koraga (Korava), Mudu Koraga, Kudiya (Male Kudiya) and Tulu compose the language distinctions of this Northern most district Kasaragod. Among these languages, Konkani (ISO 639-3 gom), belonging to Indo-Aryan language group had script in earlier days and is presently used by upper class Hindus. This is also one of the official languages of India, which is spoken in Kenya and UAE also.

The second smallest language spoken only by 236 people is Aranadan (ISO 639-3 aaf). Popularly known as Eranadan, this language is mainly spoken by natives of Eranad Taluk in Malappuram. Other native languages in this district are Allar and Paniya.

Irula (ISO 639 –3 iru), also known as Korava, is mainly spoken in Palakkad,

though it is 67 per cent intelligible with Tamil. Allar, Aranadan, Kadar and Yerukula are other natal tongues of Palakkad.

The Paniya language (ISO 639 –3 pcg), one of the five natal tongues of Kozhikode, is used in the home and religious activities. Other languages are Aranadan, Kanikkaran, Kurichiya and Muthuvan with two dialects and 68 per cent lexical similarity with Malayalam.

Kadar, Malaryan, Muthuvan and Vishavan comprise the language varieties of Thrissur. Vishavan (ISO 639-3: vis), also known as Malankudi or Malarkuti is supposed to be the smallest language in Kerala with just 150 native tongues in it that include groups on Chalakudi River near Ittyani.

Ullatan (ISO 639-3 ull) - , also known as Ulladan, Katan, Kattalan, Kochuvelan etc. speakers are seen in almost all districts of Kerala. This Dravidian, unclassified language speakers prefer to be considered Malayalis rather than Ullatan.

All Dravidian languages except Brahui have their share of users in Kerala. Major Indo-Aryan languages such as Hindi, Urdu, Marathi etc. also have place in this land in some pockets, especially in business centres, with people using them as natal tongue. Another surprising thing is that Kashmiri is also spoken as parent language by some vendors living in Kerala, to be specific, at Kovalam and surroundings.

There is foreign collaboration in language also. Indo-Portuguese (ISO 639-3 idb), similar to Tamil in phonology and syntax and is popular in Sri Lanka, has its roots in Kerala. This is used in Vypeen Island and Kochi area.

**Apart from the dialectical variations of Malayalam, this tiny state with 32 million people use more than 40 distinctive languages to speak! Many of them have their own script also.**

Another is Judeo-Malayalam, the traditional language of the Cochin Jews (also called Malabar Jews. This language is spoken today by about 8,000 people in Israel and by probably fewer than 100 in India. Judeo-Malayalam is the only known Dravidian Jewish language. Unlike most Jewish languages, Judeo-Malayalam is not written using the Hebrew alphabet. It does, however, like most Jewish languages, contain a large number of Hebrew loanwords, which are regularly transliterated, inasmuch as possible, using the Malayalam script.

French is widely used in Mahe. Being a union territory, this need not be enlisted.

Last but not the least, English, the lingua franca of the world, is also a parental language to many a Keralites, especially to Anglo-Indians. The second and third generations of non-resident Keralites living in English speaking countries also assume English as their mother tongue.

All said, there are more than 6,900 languages spoken in the world today. But scholars group them together into a very short number less than twenty. Because languages are linked to each other by shared words or sounds or grammatical constructions. The theory is that the members of each linguistic group have descended from one language, a common ancestor. Believe it or not, the original language is judged by the experts to have been spoken in surprisingly a few thousand years ago. Thus the story of the tower of Babel seems more meaningful in this context. And the relentless tussle between south and north Malayalis over dialectical variation seems futile.

Footnote: ISO 639-3 attached to each language is an international standard for language codes. The standard was published by ISO on fifth February 2007. The language codes defined in the several sections of ISO-639 are used for bibliographic purposes and, in computing and internet environments, as a key element of locale data. The codes also find use in various applications such as Wikipedia URLs for its different language editions. ■

Courtesy: Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Raymond G. Gordon, Jr., Editor, 2005, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International.

# Royal Splendour

**Dr. S. Hemachandran**

**T**hrissur, the cultural capital, occupies an unrivalled position in the history of Kerala. This famed land unfolds its chapters through the historic monuments like Sakthan Thampuran Palace, Kollamkode House, Vadakkumnatha temple etc. A number of megalithic sites which attracted the eminent archaeologists and historians are also located in and around Thrissur.

Vadakkechira Kovilakom, presently known as Sakthan Thampuran Palace was an alternative residence of the royal family of the erstwhile state of Kochi. The palace is situated on an elevated place on the northern bank of the pond (chira) flanked by two entrances on the east and west. It was enclosed by a fortification with deep ditches and gateways which

now became completely extinct. Vadakkechira Kovilakom was reconstructed to the present style by Rama Varma Sakthan Thampuran (1790 – 1805). When he became the heir apparent in 1769 Kochi was under the threat of the rulers of Calicut, Travancore and Mysore. He advised the king of Kochi to balance between the Dutch and English, the foreign powers, who were trying to establish their power at Kochi in order to boost up their trade. With great diplomacy the King of Kochi was able to arrive at a truce with the king of Travancore and Zamorin even with Mysore. After assuming power as the king of Kochi in 1790 he ruthlessly put down the feudal lords and the temple based power system and firmed up the finance by expert manipulation of trade relations. Thus he came to be known as Sakthan Thampuran. He used to stay in Thrissur

often and considered it as an alternative capital.

The eastern half of the building has a broad nadumuttam. There is a rectangular peedam (platform) of laterite and plastered with lime mortar in the middle of the nadumuttam, where the idols of Pazhayannoor Bhagavati (the family deity of the royal family of Kochi) had been worshipped. The southern side of the nadumuttam has an open hall with low roof, which had been used for auspicious ceremonies. In the north-western corner is the kitchen and in the north and east are rooms without windows. The original floor of the entire ground floor of the building is lost and at present paved with terracotta tiles and cement tiles. There are some single storeyed buildings adjacent to the main palace. They are urappura (work area), oottupura (dining hall) etc. There was a



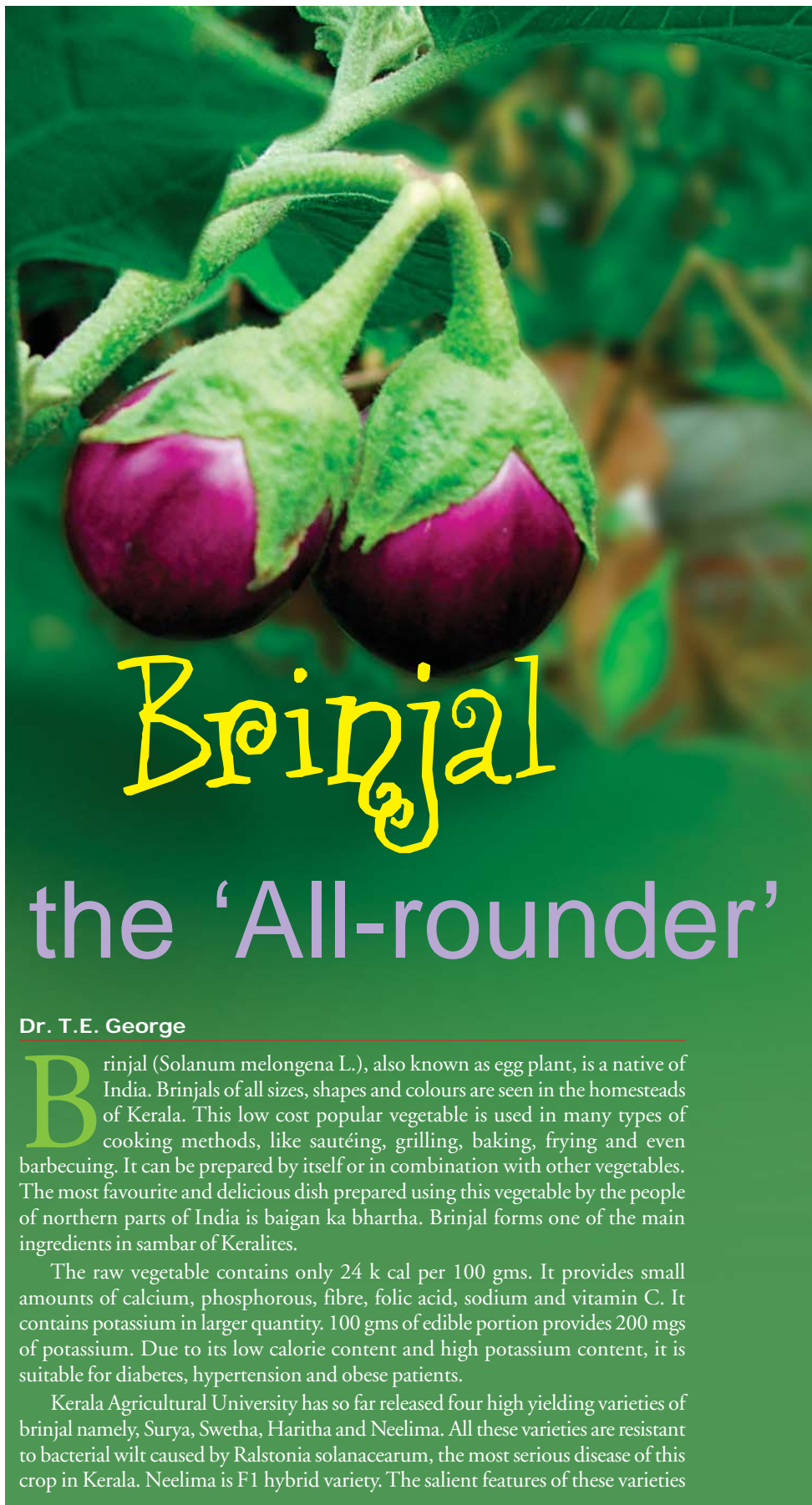


fortification surrounding the palace with a deep trench on the outside. The fortification except the western and eastern gateways is completely lost. Of the two gateways the eastern gateway is more impressive. The palace and the Thrissur town had been occupied for a brief period by Tipu Sulthan in 1789. The flagstaff installed by Tipu Sultan in the middle of the fortification is now kept near the western gateway.

Before the Mysore war, the Zamorin occupied Thrissur in the 1760s. The Zamorin who occupied this palace was died at Thrissur and he was cremated in the palace compound. The tomb of this Zamorin is preserved in the Thoppu of the Palace. The body of Sakthan Thampuran Rama Varma who died in 1805 also cremated in the palace compound. His tomb is also preserved with an ornamental (laterite and lime plastered) wall. Another king of the erstwhile state of Kochi was also died in this palace and his tomb is also preserved in the thoppu. There is a Sarppakkavu or sacred grave in the thoppu with the idols of Nagaraja and Nagayakshi. At present the Department of Archaeology has arranged an Archaeological museum in the palace without disturbing its architectural beauty. The premise of the palace has been converted into a Heritage Garden with eco friendly seating and pathways.

Vadakkechira Palace is an unusual amalgam of western architecture and traditional architecture. Originally it was a 'Nalukettu' (building with a central courtyard and structures around it on all four sides). When it was reconstructed by Sakthan Thampuran the western portion of the Nalukettu was demolished and that portion was redesigned in western style two storeyed building with rectangular columns, high roof, thick walls, broad windows etc. These features speak of the Dutch influence that is seen everywhere in the pre-British Palaces of Kochi. It has a portico like projection in the middle building, which had become the style of many buildings in Thrissur and surrounding areas. The entrance hall has thick rectangular columns which support a high wooden ceiling beams and planks. ■

The writer is Director in-charge, Department of Archaeology, Govt of Kerala.



# Brinjal

## the 'All-rounder'

Dr. T.E. George

**B**rinjal (*Solanum melongena* L.), also known as egg plant, is a native of India. Brinjals of all sizes, shapes and colours are seen in the homesteads of Kerala. This low cost popular vegetable is used in many types of cooking methods, like sautéing, grilling, baking, frying and even barbecuing. It can be prepared by itself or in combination with other vegetables. The most favourite and delicious dish prepared using this vegetable by the people of northern parts of India is baigan ka bharta. Brinjal forms one of the main ingredients in sambar of Keralites.

The raw vegetable contains only 24 kcal per 100 gms. It provides small amounts of calcium, phosphorous, fibre, folic acid, sodium and vitamin C. It contains potassium in larger quantity. 100 gms of edible portion provides 200 mgs of potassium. Due to its low calorie content and high potassium content, it is suitable for diabetes, hypertension and obese patients.

Kerala Agricultural University has so far released four high yielding varieties of brinjal namely, Surya, Swetha, Haritha and Neelima. All these varieties are resistant to bacterial wilt caused by *Ralstonia solanacearum*, the most serious disease of this crop in Kerala. Neelima is F1 hybrid variety. The salient features of these varieties

are as follows:

**Surya** : High Yield (30 t/ha); Medium sized, oval, glossy, purple coloured fruits; Average fruit weight - 90 g; Average fruit length - 8.2 cm; Released nationally.

**Swetha**: High yield (30 t/ha); Medium long, white fruits; Average fruit weight - 43 g; Average fruit length - 12.7 cm; Released nationally.

**Haritha**: Very high yield (62 t/ha); Long, light green fleshy fruits; Average fruit weight - 123 g; Average fruit length - 18 cm. Suitable for ratooning.

**Neelima**: Very high yield (65 t/ha); Large, oval to round glossy violet fruits; Average fruit weight - 176 g; Average fruit length - 12 cm.

Brinjal can be grown in all seasons under Kerala conditions, ideal time of planting being June-July, September-October and February-March. This is a transplanted vegetable. Seeds are sown in the nursery. One month old seedlings are transplanted to the main field. The seed rate varies from 37 to 50 g/ha while the spacing varies from 60 cm x 60 cm to 75 cm x 60 cm depending upon the varieties. The nutritional requirement for this crop is 300 gm nitrogen, 160 gm phosphorus and 100 gm potash for one cent of land apart from 80 to 100 kg farm yard manure. During dry periods, the crop is to be irrigated at three to four days interval. Weeding and raking are the other cultural operations to be done preferably before top dressing. Earthing up of the crop is carried out after top dressing of fertilizers at least twice during the crop growth. Harvesting of fruit can be done from the 70th day after planting onwards as soon as it attains a good size and colour. The yield from one cent of land comes to 100 to 250 kg depending upon the variety and management.

The major pest, fruit and shoot borer and the disease Phomopsis fruit rot can be controlled to a great extent by mechanical removal and destruction of pest / disease affected plant parts. If needed, insecticides of plant origin like neem based formulations can be sprayed for insect pest control.

The writer is Associate Professor & Head, Department of Olericulture, Kerala Agricultural University, Thrissur

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## Welfare Schemes and Benefits

### Pension

A member of the fund who is unable to work for a period of more than two years due to permanent physical infirmity, or has completed the age of sixty years and had remitted contribution to the Fund at least ten years continuously will be eligible for pension.

### Family Pension

The Scheme provides family pension in the event of death of a pensioner or on the death of a member who had remitted contribution for at least fifteen years continuously.

### Maternity Benefit

The Scheme provides payment of maternity wages to the female employees, who have paid contribution to the fund at least for a period one year continuously and not coming within the purview of Employees State Insurance Scheme, at the rate of minimum wages for a period of twelve weeks, in the case of delivery and for a period of six weeks, in the case of premature delivery, abortion or medical termination of pregnancy as the case may be. This benefit shall not be allowed for more than twice.

### Financial Assistance for marriage

The workers who have contributed to the scheme for a period of three years continuously are eligible to get financial assistance of Rs.5000/- to meet the expenses in connection with the marriage of their daughters. A female member of this fund is also eligible for this assistance for her own marriage. This assistance can be availed only for two times.

### Payment of funeral Assistance

An amount of Rs.1000/- will be sanctioned to the member in connection with the death of dependants of members who had contributed to the fund continuously for a period of three years.

## Medical Benefits

The scheme provides financial assistance to the members/family members who are hospitalised in Government hospitals for treatment. A maximum amount of Rs. 10,000/- will be sanctioned subject to the conditions stipulated by the Board for members who have contributed to the fund for a continuous period of three years.

## Educational Benefits

There is provision in the scheme for providing educational assistance for the education of children of members who have contributed to the fund continuously for a period of one year.

## Payment of Death Benefit



**Family Pension Scheme provides family pension in the event of death of a pensioner or on the death of a member who had remitted contribution for at least fifteen years continuously.**

If a member died due to illness or accident within three years of his membership period, an amount of Rs.5,000/- will be sanctioned to his family being death benefit and if the death is occurred after three years of his membership an additional amount of Rs.1,000/- will be added to the above benefit for each completed year of membership beyond three years, subject to a maximum of Rs.20,000/-.

The writer is Chief Executive Officer, Kerala Shops and Commercial Establishments Workers' Welfare Fund Board.





**Dr. N.G.K. Pillai**

The climate of an year of Bharata Varsha is divided into six seasons. The northward movement of sun –utharayana kala – and its act of dehydration bring about three seasons beginning from sisira (late winter) to summer. January- February and February to March. The southward movement of sun – Dekshinayana kala – and its act of hydration gives rise to the other three seasons beginning with rainy season to hemanta (early winter). March April to April May; May June to June July (Summer).

In the period of visarga or emission (hydration) winds are not very dry as they are during the period of ‘Adana’ or dehydration. The period of emission

predominantly the qualitative of the moon with the unstained cooling property, continuously delights the world with its soothing rays. The period of dehydration on the other hand is dominated by the qualities of agni. So these three – the sun, wind and moon being governed by the time, nature and the path they follow constitute the cause of time season, taste in drugs and diet, etc are vitiate the bodily equilibrium of doshas in Vata, Pitha and Kapha and thereby the strength of the body.

During the period of Adana kala or dehydration period not only the sun with its rays but also winds with their sharp velocity and dryness absorb the moisture from the earth. Winds progressively brings late winter, spring, summer which enhance the bitter, astringent and

pungent tastes respectively, which all having drying effect, and as a result, human being also become weak. The end of summer and beginning of rainy season in ‘Karkadaka month becomes ideal for Ayurvedic positive health care treatment and thereby correct the imbalance of doshas take place during the hydration period.

During the rainy season, autumn and winter, the sun moves towards the south, and its power of heating is slackened by various factors viz. the time, course, storm and rain. The earth is relieved of its heat by the rainwater and rugs having sour, saline and sweet tastes, which cause unctuousness in the body, increase during rainy season, autumn and winter respectively. As a result of which human being also progressively grow in strength

during the period of visargakala (emission). During the beginning of the period of emission and at the end of the period of dehydration, weakness prevails in human beings. Ayurvedic classics advocate specific dietetics and regimen for each season to restore health by making the balance of doshas. During the different seasons of the year the triads as indulge certain changes. For example, Vayu gets aggravated during June August at the end of Summer. Pitha get aggravated between October to December - during Autumn, and Kapha gets aggravated between February to April - during Spring. If certain precautionary measures are not taken during this period the person may expose himself to certain diseases. Ayurvedic classics suggested that to promote positive health and prevent the occurrence of illness one should take medicated enema (vasthi) purgation during autumn and emesis during spring.

Ayurveda is a traditional and divine form of medicine, which is mainly practiced in Indian sub continent and widely in Kerala from time immemorial. Ayurveda gives emphasis to prevention of diseases than the cure of illness. With this aim to correct the imbalance of doshas take place in the body due to the climatic changes, modified life style, fast food life and atmospheric pollution are susceptible to the body to different diseased conditions. Therefore drinking of medicated gruel (Karkidaka kanji) during this Karkidaka masa followed with Kayakalpa chikithsa stailise good health, longevity, youth fullness and clear vision of senses and mind. Mind and body are inter related and good mind can remain only in a healthy body.

Therefore Ayurvedic positive health core treatment is very essential during the Holy Ramayana Masa - for purification of mind and body by rejuvenation therapy. The medicated gruel enhances the Agnibela, boost the immune system and thereby preventing from illness.

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## Labour Relations Smooth and Strong

with a view to strengthen the inspection machinery, a Works Committee and a Finance Committee in Textile industry (both could not complete its function due to various reasons) for conducting a work study prior to a long term settlement for wage enhancement etc. are few examples. In some other occasions sub committees were constituted for inquiring burning issues in the industry and report to the Committee for bringing out amicable solutions. The wage agreements in the plantation sector were ordinarily executed in the Plantation Labour Committee. These instances give light on the major role played by the Industrial Relations Committees in protecting the interests of workers.

The Tripartite Advisory Committees and other Committees constituted under various enactments also had a major role in protecting the interests of the workers employed in that particular sector/employment.

Though these IRCs do not have a legal footing the decisions of the Committee have been wholeheartedly accepted by the industrial partners because of its representative nature (Representatives of the Central Trade Unions, major Trade Unions and State level employers' organisations in the industry and Govt. representative are the constituents). The contributions of the special IRCs like the one constituted for the National Thermal Power Project, Kayamkulam, Ammonia Plant, FACT, Kochi, Hydroelectric Power Projects of K.S.E.B at Kakkad, Edamalar and Diesel Power Project, Nallalam etc., are other achievements of the tripartite bodies in the industrial relations in the State. A critical appraisal of the decisions/agreements made by all these tripartite bodies, statutory and non-statutory, for the last fifty years will give a picture of its contribution and role in protecting the interests of workers and the industry in general.

Few years ago, when there was an issue of the loading and unloading in the Civil Supplies Department, the first suggestion was none other than the constitution of an IRC for the Public Distribution System (PDS). Similarly,

when the problems of the migrant workers especially women workers in and outside the State were raised, the State Women's Commission, Trade Unions and NGOs have requested the government to appoint an IRC with the representatives of Principal Employers, Contractors, NGOs and representative of Women's Commission for effectively attending these issues. All these instances show the thrust on the achievements the Department has made in the functioning of the tripartite consultative bodies especially IRCs. However, the instance where the Hon'ble High Court turned down the implementation of the decision /agreement of an IRC due to its legal infirmity to enforce its decision/ agreement is not ignored here.

When these tripartite consultative bodies have immense scope in protecting the interests of workers and industry in general, it is totally disgraceful to see that the number of IRCs has been reduced from twenty to six and the tripartite Advisory bodies required to be constituted under the provisions of various enactments are yet to be re-constituted. If the words of an eminent trade unionist who was a prominent member in many of the earlier tripartite bodies are believed, "the future of some of the existing IRCs is also in stake".

When there is hue and cry from various quarters regarding the ineffectiveness / slackness on the part of the Department in protecting the interests of the workers, if more tripartite consultative bodies are appointed for more industries and make the existing IRCs more effective, many of the day to day problems as well as the seasonal issues could be effectively curtailed. As things stand, the industry as a whole is expecting some urgent look on these issues by the government and take steps to constitute as many new IRCs including one for the 'sunrise' industries, Special Economic Zones, Infoparks etc. The government may also consider in providing a legal footing to the non- statutory tripartite bodies to strengthen its effectiveness. ■

The writer is Labour Welfare Officer, Government Central Press, Thiruvananthapuram





FIRST PRIZE  
Suji Athira



THIRD PRIZE  
K.R Satheesan



PHOTO  
Prasanna





SECOND PRIZE  
Wilston Charlse T

PHOTOFEATURE

State Photography  
Awards 2007



PHOTO  
Gloria Boss



PHOTO  
K.J. Vincent





## Reminiscence of the Past

FOR THE AUDIENCE assembled in the old legislature hall in the Government Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram, it was a rare occasion to witness the recreation of a 50 year old scene. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Assembly of unified Kerala, historic events and proceedings of the first assembly were recreated under the aegis of the Information and Public Relations Department.

The session was attended by the new faces representing the then Governor B. Ramakrishna Rao, Chief Minister Pattom

Thanupillai, Ministers K.R. Gouriamma, H. Muhammed Koya and others. The programmes started with the Governor's Address, followed by the moving of Motion of Thanks to the Governor. Regular proceedings like debates on the address and on the amendments to the motion, reply speech by the Chief Minister, moving of calling-attention notices etc. were also arranged. V.S Achuthanandan, Chief minister, has inaugurated the function. M. Vijaya Kumar, Minister for Law, Sports and Youth Affairs, has also attended the function.

## Award for Kerala Tourism

THE PACIFIC ASIA TRAVEL ASSOCIATION (PATA) has recognised Kerala Tourism for its sustainable and committed efforts for promotion of tourism by giving the prestigious PATA Gold Medal award for the year 2007.

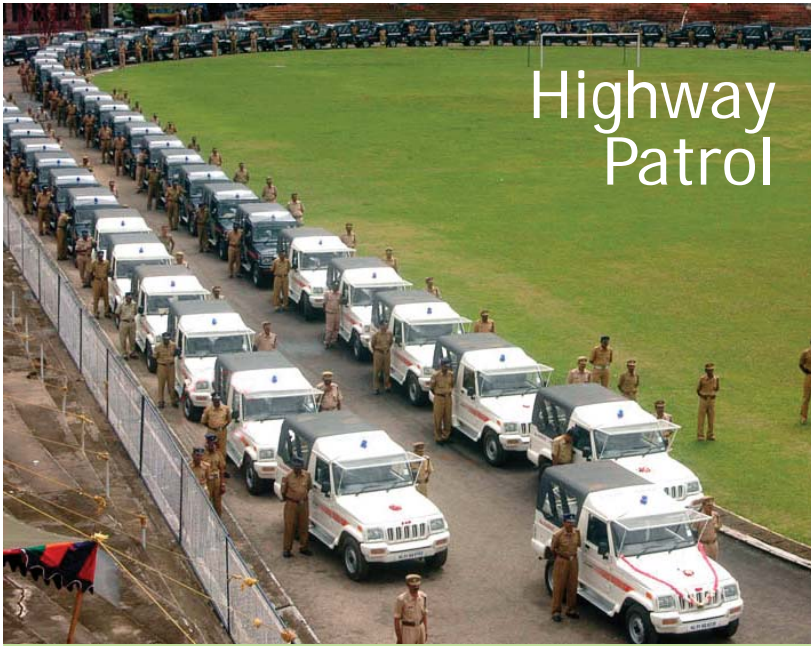
In the culture section, Aranmula Heritage Project has been selected for the award. The brochure on Thekkady bagged the award in the section, 'Marketing media brochure'.



## E-learning scheme launched

IN ORDER to provide quality education to the children from all sections of society, a comprehensive e-learning programme has been initiated at Kottayam recently.





## Highway Patrol

**THE HIGH WAY POLICE** in the State has got a face-lift. The State Police has provided 42 new patrol vehicles for the High Way Police. Kodyeri Balakrishnan, Minister for Home in Thiruvananthapuram, flagged off the fleet. Speaking on the occasion, Kodyeri Balakrishnan urged the highway police men to focus more on preventing the accidents. New vehicles have also been made available to major police stations in the State.

The main objective of the highway police is to help the victims in road accidents, preventing highway robberies, checking rash driving, ensuring smooth flow of traffic and detecting sand and spirit smuggling. Each vehicle is equipped with first aid kits, stretchers and other necessary equipments. The team in the jeep is provided with anti-riot equipments, including helmets, batons and polycarbonate shields. The team consists of four police men led by a Sub Inspector.

A fleet of new vehicles has also been allotted to various police stations in the State.

## Alleppey Coir

**Now**, the coir from Alappuzha has a brand name to conquer the market. The international brand name given to this unique product is 'Alleppey Coir'. G.K. Pillai, Union Commerce Secretary has handed over the certificate of registration under the Geographical Indications (GI) Act to A.C. Jose, Chairman, Coir Board.

Accepting the honour, A.C. Jose said that the benefit of GI registration would be that, the products would be certified for their origin, eliminating imitation and ensuring quality during the inspection process.



Inaugurating the project, Governor R.L. Bhatia said this move would help to enhance the unique position the district acquired in the field of education. Addressing the function, M.A. Baby, Minister for Education, said the Government was committed to providing quality education for the deserving sections in the society.

Under the project, it is envisaged to provide Edusat Terminal, 29-inch colour TV, LCD projector, educational CDs and broadband internet connection to all Government and aided schools. It is for the first time that such a comprehensive project is being implemented in schools.

## Snake Boats begin the show

**ARRIVAL OF NEW MALAYALAM** year marks the harvest season in Kerala. Onam, the National festival of the State, falls in the first month of Malayalam New Year. This is also the season for Snake Boat race in Kerala. As usual, the boats are ready for the show. Snakeboat races have become one of the icons of Kerala tourism and attracts thousands of visitors to the region. The extend of the race varies from the hills to the low lying plains down the sea coast that measures up to 70 kms.

Boats which are used for this race can be termed as the longest water vessel used for sports purpose. One of the famous water carnivals is Nehru Trophy Boat Race held at Punnamada lake in Alappuzha scheduled to be held on 11th August 2007.





# Fillip to Industry

The State Government is all set to host new industries and IT parks to boost the economy and job opportunity. The government has cleared new industrial and commercial policy and approved a new IT policy recently. The industrial policy lays emphasis on strengthening the single window clearance system and simplifying licensing procedures to underline the fact that the State is investor friendly and conducive for industry.

The Kerala Single Window Clearance Act, 1999, is to be amended for the purpose. The government will provide incentives for investments in supporting facilities and the equipment and systems that are eligible for subsidies will be notified. Besides, special incentive package facilities to large investments of Rs. 100 crore and more will be considered by the State High Level Committee.

A transparent fast track mechanism will be evolved for land acquisition for the development of infrastructure through public-private partnership. And creation of a land bank also is envisaged. Traditional Industries are also getting fillip with advanced technology and they will be made to focus on high-end products.

The IT policy aims at transforming the State into an exclusive knowledge society. It declares that steps will be taken to ensure that IT literacy reaches even the remotest parts of the State and also all sections of the society. And the policy lays emphasis on using IT to rejuvenate the primary, secondary and tertiary spheres of economic activity. The government has also given special attention to strengthen power sector. Now, the State is moving into an era of development.



