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Editorial: 0471-2518648
Subscription: 0471-2517036



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

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Kerala Calling

First Floor

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Thiruvananthapuram

PIN 695 001

These may also be e mailed to

keralacalling@gmail.com

Unused scripts or photographs will be returned if self addressed envelopes having sufficient postage stamps are also sent with the articles.

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COVERSTORY

It is a fact that the chief minister's unrelenting efforts made the rescue mission faster. Prior to the return of the nurses, the chief minister camped in New Delhi for two days, holding discussions with Union Minister for External Affairs Sushma Swaraj and coordinating with other officials of the ministry and the Indian embassy in Iraq.

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The campaign seeks to achieve this objective through the tried and tested method of intervention through education institutions. The purpose of this campaign is not only mere prevention in the use of narcotic substance but also make the campus free of all addictive substances. Implementation of legal provisions to protect children from narcotic substances, creating awareness and raising learning atmosphere are some of the enshrined goals.

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Cometh the Hour Cometh the Man

"I am relieved. Not only I, but everyone in Kerala." This was the reaction of Chief Minister Oommen Chandy following the safe return of the stranded Malayalee nurses in Iraq. The timely intervention of the State government and the crucial role played by the Chief Minister in the rescue mission were hailed by many. All the 45 Malayali nurses, who were under the custody of a faction engaged in fighting in Iraq returned home safely.

It was the Chief Minister's unrelenting efforts, which made the rescue mission much faster. Reaching New Delhi with his Cabinet colleagues couple of days prior to the release of the nurses, the Chief

Minister apprised the Union Minister for External Affairs Sushma Swaraj about the situation. Following discussions a flurry of activities ensued involving the officials of the External Affairs ministry and the Indian embassy in Iraq.

Prior to the release of the nurses, the national capital was abuzz with discussions and diplomatic talks. The focus and perseverance of the Kerala government was evident in all these developments. Eventually on 4th of July the deck got cleared for the release and departure of the nurses from Iraq. And the Chief Minister left New Delhi only after ensuring that the nurses were

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

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

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FOCUS



Chief Minister
Oommen Chandy
visits Karimadom
Colony

headed for home. The government had been focusing on the safe return of the nurses from the war-torn country and succeeded 100 percent in its efforts. All 45 Malayalee nurses plus one from Tamil Nadu reached Kerala safely. The Chief Minister attributed the success of the operation to the efforts of the State and Central governments and the Indian embassy in Iraq.

Upon release of nurses in Iraq the State administration acted very swiftly. All necessary arrangements were done by the officials of the Cochin International Airport and the Department of Non-resident Keralites'

Affairs, under the supervision of Minister for Norka K C Joseph. They were received and taken to respective destinations in Kerala and were also provided with an immediate financial assistance of Rs 5000.

This incident throws light on two facts. The first is that we have got an able administration that can tackle unprecedented events diplomatically. Above all, we have a leader in Chief Minister Oommen Chandy with exceptional brilliance, who is ever willing to take all responsibilities on his shoulders.

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PRINTING

Orange Printers Private Ltd.

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Angel Fund to provide capital for Startups



The response to the Kerala State Entrepreneur Development Mission had been overwhelming so far, and the government had proposed to set up an ‘Angel Fund’ to provide capital for startups, said Chief Minister Oommen Chandy while releasing the logo of Young Entrepreneurs Summit. The Young Entrepreneurs Summit (YES), organised in association with the Industries Department and the Information Technology (IT) Department, is scheduled to be held on 12th September in Kochi. “YES aims at inculcating entrepreneurship among youngsters in Kerala. The summit will showcase joint ventures by various development agencies, to develop the entrepreneurship culture

in the State. The KSIDC and the KFC will provide funds for the proposed Angel Fund. A panel of business mentors will be formed in the State, by including successful entrepreneurs. The KSIDC will also provide value-added services, such as mentoring, nurturing tie-ups and guidance to young entrepreneurs,” the Chief Minister said. Around 2000 participants are expected to take part in the summit. Marking the opening of the summit, 5000 ‘Raspberry Pis’ will be distributed to school students. The Startup Village at KINFRA High-tech Park, Kalamassery, will be developed on 13.2 acres of land. The `150-crore project, will be completed by March 2016,” the CM added. Industries and IT Minister P K Kunhalikutty was also present at the meeting.

Role of Kudumbashree lauded

Kudumbashree is taking part in a great social initiative by supporting the government in creating awareness among the people,” said Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala. He was delivering the inaugural address at the state-level launch of the mass financial literacy programme jointly organised by the Kudumbashree in association with the Home Department. “The number of families being trapped through taking loans from blade mafia are numerous and the women are the worst sufferers. The government intends to impart financial literacy and

Green Campaign by I&PRD

Information and Public Relations department observed the 153rd birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore in a disparate way. Lots of tree saplings were planted in the premise of Tagore theatre. The Chief Minister, two Ministers, cultural leaders, students and each and everyone gathered on the premises joined hands to make the tree sapling planting mission of I&PRD a grand success. As many as 153 saplings were planted on the premises of the theatre that spreads over 5.5 acres. Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, who inaugurated the programme, described it as a model which is an apt celebration for the birth anniversary of the great poet. Cultural Affairs Minister K C Joseph said the variations in climate are warnings of the catastrophic situation that may follow if the symptoms given out by nature are ignored. Health Minister V S Sivakumar, Chief Secretary E K Bharat Bhushan, Chairman of Kerala Sahitya Akademi Perumbadavam Sreedharan, Kerala State Biodiversity Board Chairman Oommen V Oommen, I&PRD Secretary Rani George and Director Mini Antony, among others, took part in the initiative by planting saplings. Two hundred students of Government Higher Secondary School for Girls, Cotton Hill were also present who completed the task by planting the rest of the saplings. A choir group of women and men clad in green and white dress sung poems by Tagore and songs that praised the earth and the environment.



Chief Minister Oommen Chandy inaugurates the Reading Week celebrations

awareness among the people through 40 lakh women to promote prudential banking practices. The initiative by Kudumbashree to create awareness among 'Ayalkoottam' members towards fighting injustice is laudable, the Home Minister added. Social Justice Minister M K Muneer said that Operation Kuber being implemented by the government is a great initiative.

Starry brand for Kudumbasree

Actor Manju Warrier has been declared the brand ambassador of Kudumbashree's organic farming project by Social Justice Minister M K Muneer. The Minister said that quality control measures would be ensured in the production of organic vegeta-

production. The movie 'How Old Are You', in which Manju Warrier played the lead role, pictured a woman coming out successfully in terrace farming, conveys a message on how the impossible can be turned possible by bringing the society together," the Minister said.



bles through Kudumbashree's farming initiative. "The state faces two problems-scarcity of vegetables and vegetables which are not good for human consumption. Those with vested interests are experimenting on how to make people sick in several ways. If the Kudumbashree women take an initiative, the state can be made self-sufficient in vegetable

Manju Warrier spoke on the needs to grow vegetables in households. "A generation or two ago, we were self-sufficient by growing required vegetables in our courtyards. Now we wait for truck loads of vegetables coming from other states. If those places are hit by hartal, we starve," she said. Director Rosshan Andrews addressed the gathering through Skype.



Central team holds talks with CM

The State had submitted a memorandum to the Centre seeking financial assistance in view of the losses from summer rain worth Rs.141.65 crore, including damage to agriculture crops and houses. The Chief Minister Oommen Chandy held discussions with the Central team led by Joint Secretary Sailesh which arrived here to assess the losses from summer rain. Our officials gave a presentation before the team on rainfall during summer, which was higher than in previous years. It caused considerable losses in Thiruvananthapuram, Alappuzha, and Wayanad districts. The team asked the government to prepare a separate report on losses suffered after the memorandum was submitted. The team would file its report on verification of the losses in seven days. A special meeting of the Cabinet allocated Rs.18 crore for providing urgent relief to people affected by sea erosion in nine coastal districts. Chief Minister Oommen Chandy said that urgent steps would be taken to repair damaged sea walls. The District Collectors had been asked to provide compensation for loss of coconut trees and properties.



Process Waste at Source

Every citizen should take the initiative to avoid water logging at homes and surroundings and process waste at source” said Health Minister V S Sivakumar. He was inaugurating the state-level campaign of ‘Suchitwa Keralam Arogya Keralam’ programme. The minister said that as a result of focussed activity of the Health Department, it has been able to better control the spread of dengue fever. Severe fever cases have not been reported in the state and this has happened due to the effective implementation of the anti-fever programmes.

Multi-purpose Stadium Inaugurated

Sports in Kerala needs to get a resurgence, said Minister for Sports Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan while inaugurating the multi-purpose stadium and tennis training programme by the Mahesh Bhupathi Tennis Academies (MBTA) at the Mudavanmugal Lower Primary School. “When all the infrastructural facilities for the 35th National Games are in place, Kerala will be in a position to become the number one in Indian sports,” the Sports Minister said. The stadium at Mudavanmugal is the first to be inaugurated in the city under the Sports Minister’s Infrastructural Leap To Excellence (SMILE) Project. Around 41 more stadiums under the SMILE Project are functioning or are under various stages of construction throughout the state.



Kerala to host 35th National Games from 31st January



Anti-Narcotics Day to be observed as 'Dry Day'



The International Anti-Narcotics Day will be observed as 'dry day' from next year onwards, said Chief Minister Oommen Chandy. He was speaking at a function to honour individuals and organisations who have made significant contributions to mitigate the ills of alcohol and drug abuse on the occasion of International Anti-Narcotics Day.

Introducing a ban on alcohol, with a high

demand for it, can have dangerous side-effects. For this reason, we have focussed on reducing the yearning for alcohol. To bring down the availability of alcohol, the government has decided not to sanction permits for new beverages outlets. Only bars with five-star facilities will be allowed to function. Liquor beverages outlets will be closed on Anti-Narcotics Day from now on," the CM added.

The 35th National Games to be hosted by Kerala will be held from January 31 to February 14 next year. Making the formal announcement in this regard, the Indian Olympic Association president, N. Ramachandran expressed hope that the 15-day event, to be attended by a total of 11,641 participants, including 7,744 athletes and to be held across seven districts across the State, would provide a great impetus for Indian sport in the years to come.

Inaugurating the countdown clock to 218 days, the Union Minister of Sports, Sarbanand Sonowal, hailed the contribution of Kerala athletes both at the National and international level over the years and expressed the hope that Kerala would put in place a proper legacy plan for the optimal utilisation of the state-of-the-art infrastructure and facilities being created for the Games. The IOA secretary general, Rajeev Mehta, unveiled the various manifestations of the Games mascot, 'Ammu', at the meeting. The 15-day event will see competitions for a total of 365 gold medals, an equal number of silver medals and 477 bronze medals.



Minister for Norka KC Joseph inaugurates the State level training programme on Pravasi Rehabilitation Schemes



Co-operation for Sus

It is doubtless to say that wealth is the foundation of a nation and welfare must be the objective of the ruling class. Any ruler cannot materialize this objective unless a dedicated team is with him or her. Grassroot level thinking for universal wellbeing is inevitable. Here is the importance of co-operative organizations.

The 91st anniversary of an international declaration is being celebrated all over the world from the fifth of this month. Nine decades back, it was the International Co-operative Alliance(ICA), the global organization dedicated for the well being of the co-operative movement which took a firm decision to propagate the ideology of co-operation among the member nations effectively. During that period the ICA had the back support of a handful of members, lesser than a dozen.

An annual plan with achievable objectives within a calendar year was suggested by the Germany at the preliminary session of the Alliance get together. It was also suggested that the introduction and implementation of project based policies and their evaluation ought to be conducted at the end of every year. Dr Eric Miller, the then adviser of the Alliance humorously described those projects were energy capsules for internal as well as international co-operation. Each member country had to make itself internally fit at first, and then strive for international amity. He also predicted that they would rewrite the global financial order within a century. He quoted the theories of Adam Smith, Alfred Marshal, and Robinson to substantiate his views.

foundation of a nation and welfare must be the objective of the ruling class. Any ruler cannot materialize this objective unless a dedicated team is with him or her. Grassroot level thinking for universal wellbeing is inevitable. Here is the importance of co-operative organizations. After the realization of the essence of this noble movement, the UN came forward to assist ICA with creative guidelines. A wonderful suggestion 'A year, A theme, An object ' mooted by the UN was unanimously welcomed. Initially let us think at micro level, then step towards macro level'. It seemed the words of Dr Samson, the head of the Research and Development was closely connected to the opinions of Dr Miller. The following were the themes recently introduced by the ICA in consultation with the UN Co-operative enterprises empowers the women folk (2010), Youth the future of co-operative enterprises (2011),Co-operative enterprises build a better world(2012),Co-operative enterprises remain strong in the time of crisis(2013).

Sustainable Development for all is the subject which was unitedly chosen

It is doubtless to say that wealth is the



Sustainable Development

for this year's celebration. The concept of sustainable development is not a novel idea. It is one of the important modules of both economics and development studies. Before thinking about sustainable development, we have to reverse our focus towards development and non development or under development. The economists divided nations into three; the developed, developing and under developed. Broadly speaking national income, per capita income, sectoral stability, infrastructure growth are the basic criteria for development. They are the main titles in the progress report of a nation. If it achieves a minimum pass mark in the above subjects, it can be viewed as developing and vice versa.

In literary terms development means a transformation from gloom to brightness and warmth. Here there may be a lot of hurdles to overcome. Poverty, increasing rate of population, economic instability, unemployment, illiteracy, political crisis, etc. are some of them. Not regional, but local planning with hightech monitoring is inevitable for the lifting up of such obstacles. The co-operative organisations, which are

working at the grassroot level, can do a lot in this regard. A close link without any bias between co-operative organisations and local self government is necessary for the implementation of projects in economic, agriculture, industrial and educational sectors of rural areas.

To maintain what we accumulated is the base of sustainable development. Instability is ruling everywhere. Strenuous effort is required for the preservation of our possessions. From basic infrastructure to the top level administration, various stabilizing agents must work hard to keep everything in tact. The co-operative enterprises, the creators of parallel economy in Kerala, had already proven their stabilizing capacity during the recent financial crisis as a result of the economic depression in western countries. Its price control mechanism had reaped highest appreciation during the last inflation. Nearly 25000 co-operative enterprises are still functioning in various sectors of Kerala. Their contributions to the economic, social and cultural fields are not notable, but imitable. Let us request the policy makers to take them confidence and offer them a chance to take part in the development and post development activities. ■

The author is the Chief Editor, SAHAJAA, an online co-operative initiative



Making Campus Clean

As the use of narcotic products such as marijuana and ganja is found high among students, Government of Kerala recently-launched a new programme named 'Clean Campus Safe Campus'. The project is intended to make the campuses free from drug abuse and will be a countervailing force. This is a joint movement initiated by Home, health and Education departments. "It is shocking that drug parlours are functioning in the state and drug party and drug evenings are being conducted. An international mafia is tightening its grip in the state providing narcotic candies, ice cream and pills to woo children," said Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala, while inaugurating the International day against drug abuse.

The project, launched by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy early this month, aims at total eradication of substance abuse among students. The programme includes various awareness programmes through media, including videos. The drive will seek support from Students Police Cadets, NCC, Scouts and Guides, school PTAs and local bodies. The Home Department and the police will take strong steps to crack down on those who propagate banned



The campaign seeks to achieve this objective through the tried and tested method of intervention through education institutions. The purpose of this campaign is not only mere prevention in the use of narcotic substance but also make the campus free of all addictive substances. Implementation of legal provisions to protect children from narcotic substances, creating awareness and raising learning atmosphere are some of the enshrined goals.

tobacco and narcotic products.

The implicit purpose of this campaign is to nurture a healthy, happy and productive future citizens of the State. The prime purpose is to carve out a healthy society through children and students. The campaign seeks to achieve this objective through the tried and tested method of intervention through education institutions. The purpose of this campaign is not only mere prevention in the use of narcotic substance but also make the campus free of all addictive substances. Implementation of legal provisions to protect children from narcotic substances, creating awareness and raising learning atmosphere are some of the enshrined goals of this campaign.

Implementation and Monitoring

The government has decided to constitute a three-tier monitoring committee to implement the 'Clean Campus, Safe Campus' project. The structure will consist of school, district and state-level monitoring committees. The head of the institution will serve as the chairperson of the school-level committee, while the district collector will chair the district-level committee. The state-level committee will be chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary of the Home Department.

Objectives of the campaign

To ensure better and effective enforcement of the NDPS act, COTPA act, MV act, ABKARI act KP act, Juvenile Justice Act, POSCO Act etc. in and around the premises of the educational institution with active participation of all stake holders.

To create an invisible firewall around our children protecting from the nefarious activities of antisocial elements.

To prevent and control socially deviant behavior, including criminal offences and substances use including tobacco, alcohol, and other harmful substance among children and students.

To ensure traffic safety in the school area surroundings.

To protect children from physical and sexual abuse effectively check and restrict availability of

pornographic material to children and student.

To provide students a caring, safe and nurturing environment in school.

To create law abiding and socially responsible children

To early detect socially deviant behavior among students and to take corrective measures.

To prevent truancy among students and to take corrective measures.

To motivate and enable parents, teachers and society to seriously take their responsibility towards children.

To ensure better coordination and participation of various government department like police, social welfare and education, various non-government organizations and academic institutions in the above activities.

n and Safe



conservation, road safety, cyber crimes as well as the ill-effects of substance abuse. The committee will also aid and ensure student's involvement in the comprehensive development of the region.

The functions of the school-level committee being wide and varied, a large number of people from various streams serve as its stakeholders. Station House Officer of the nearest police station, ward Councillor, representatives of PTA, students representatives of the local autorickshaw unions, labour unions, cultural organisations and women's welfare organisations will serve as its members.

The district-level committee will meet once in three months to review the functioning of school-level committees. The committee will organise surprise visits to schools. State-level committees will meet once in six months.

Ministers for Home, Education and Health will oversee the overall efficient functioning of the three-tier system. District police chief will be the convenor of the district-level committee, while General Education Secretary will serve as the convenor of the state-level committee. A state-level committee headed by Home Secretary Nivedita P Haran will oversee the project. School youth festivals will have contests based on the 'Clean Campus, Safe Campus' theme. Let us join together to make our Campus Clean and Safe. ■

The school-level committee will be responsible for several monitoring activities on the ground level. One of the key functions of the committee will be inspecting and reporting the presence of tobacco products, narcotic substances as well as obscene materials near school premises. Internet cafes and CD shops near schools will be thoroughly checked, to curb the sale of unlawful items. If students fail to give reasons for missing class, the committee has the power to inquire into it. It is comparatively easy to put a check on

student activities in school and at home. As it is difficult to monitor the student's activities during the time when he or she travels from home to school, the government plans to introduce a new tracking system to rectify this.

Another function of the committee is to listen to victims of physical, mental or sexual abuse. Students will be encouraged to share their issues. Free hours will be utilised for counselling the students. Apart from monitoring, the school-level committee will hold awareness classes on environmental



11 July 2014

Message for World Population Day

"On this World Population Day, I call on all with influence to prioritize youth in development plans, strengthen partnerships with youth-led organizations, and involve young people in all decisions that affect them. By empowering today's youth, we will lay the groundwork for a more sustainable future for generations to come"

- Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General

It is fascinating to observe that the value of children are increasing in Kerala and are in desperate need of intervention. The trends in Malayalis show a sharp drop in overall population of their children. Kerala's child population growth rate is dropped by 8.5 percent in 10 years. The number of children under 6 years old is falling all districts in Kerala, except Malappuram. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) declined at a low level and the average number of children a woman have during her childbearing years in Kerala is 1.6. Means, on an average Malayali couples do not have even two children.

It shows the upshot of current age specific birth rates, and a fast declining trend of Population growth. By now, the total population of Pathanamthitta

and Idukki districts is declining, correspondingly a negative growth rate of 3 percent and 1.8 percent. More or less 12 Taluks in Central Kerala have already shown a fall in total population. The growth rate of children between 0 and 6 years in Pathanamthitta is 24 percent, a record negative growth among the Indian districts. A clear district-wise graphical analysis is shown in figures. As stated above, Malayalis now have one of the lowest fertility rates in the Country, and at the same time, one of the highest longevity rates, and becoming more and more weighted toward older people.

Most of the districts in Kerala have an increased infant and child survival rate, larger access to education and health services, collectively with the progress made in empowering women

AGEING

EFFECT IN

POPULATION

and enhancing their participation in the labour force, have contributed to disrupt childbearing and to reduce the number of children women have over their lifetimes. These changes have contributed to improve maternal and child health, and in some extent preventing the poverty levels to enhance the state's economic growth.

In Kerala, if the fertility rate remains constant, the working age populations will also decline and that of the elderly population increases. It will lead to a rising dependency ratio among Malayali families. They will be increasingly dependent economically and socially on a smaller number of children in families. When the population ageing increase its speed, and a generation does not produce enough children to replace, leads to an absolute reductions in the

total population of the state in near future. As a consumer state with a non-industrialized society having low agricultural performance, this demographic style may not divulge to a beneficial effect on our development activities.

Theoretically, these changes in Kerala demography are predestined like any other population, as part of the various stages in the demographic transition measures. These changes from high to low fertility in Kerala, comparing to other major states are mainly because of the delay of marriage and wide-ranging use of contraception, ensuing from socio-economic changes such as the improved literacy levels. Literacy levels improved over the decades, the lower castes and minorities has demanded the right to

LATION

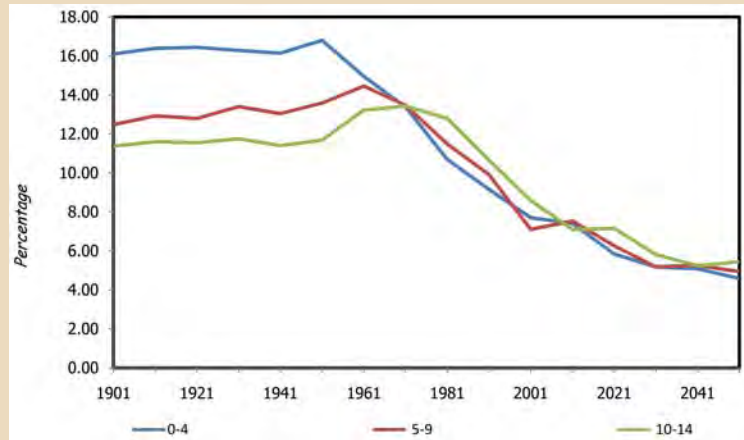


education and their stages in accessing primary education are almost become common in the state now.

It is very clear in Kerala now is that the younger cohorts are marrying later ages than their older partners. Kerala has always had a fairly high age at marriage, social and cultural principles, progress in female literacy and social amendments are the part of the cause to the rise in women age at marriage. Many Malayali men decided to get married when they are in a view to set up an independent life. Farming or cultivation has been no longer feasible to them and even growing coconuts, pepper, cardamom and cashews in sub-urban and or in rural Kerala has become a challenge, and there is a shortage of adult labour everywhere. Malayali men have been completely devastated the conventional farming practice and they were obligatorily to seek white collar or technical jobs which lead them to gather new expertise's to get in beneficial employment, and this has been one of the intense reasons to get them delayed in their marriages. Kerala has been an out migration state for a long time. But now in contrast, it has an acute labor shortage for manual work and has started importing workers from other states.

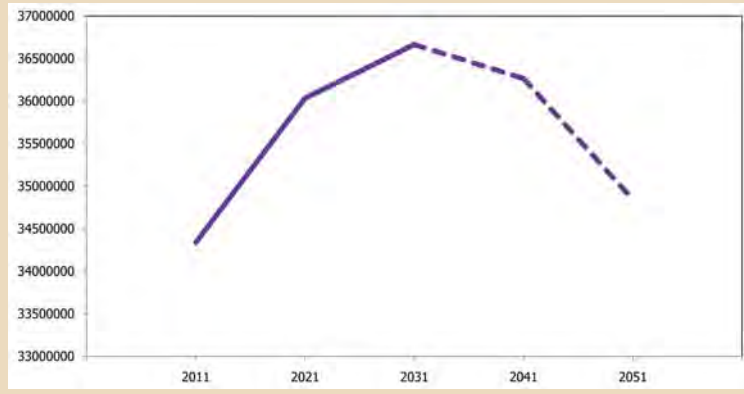
Over the years, the small family has become a norm in Kerala. Diminishing death rates, mainly the decline in infant mortality indeed would be a factor to the fertility decline. The choice for women to determine about her pregnancy is another momentous factor. Most of the traditional families in Kerala, women have enjoyed higher status than women anywhere in India. They have benefited autonomy to take their family

Declining Children, Kerala 1901-2051 (Percent)



Source: Estimated from Census of India (1901-2011)

Trends in Kerala's Total Population (2011-2051)

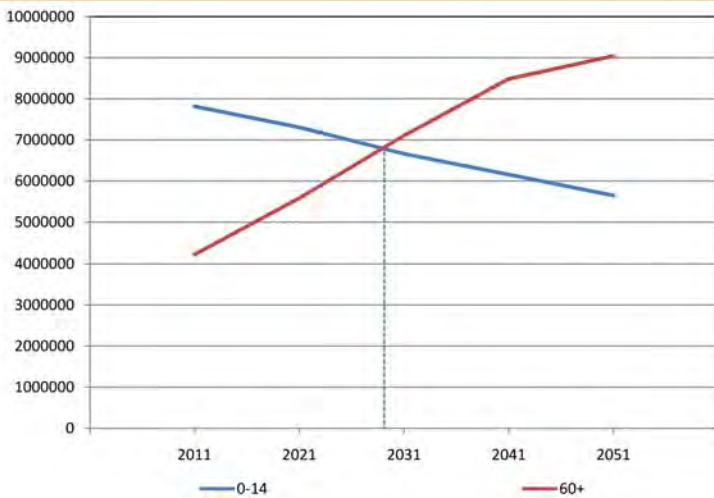


decisions to control the pregnancy - cultural factors have been one of the reasons. Besides this, the family planning program has helped in regulating the number of children, but the incense for a small family has emerged in Kerala because of societal changes. The mass education programs altered the family wealth

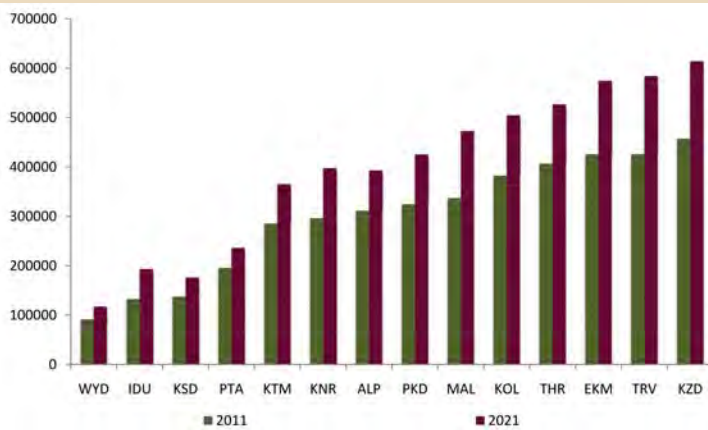
and affect the track of the income flow between cohorts and ultimately resulted in to the low fertility of Kerala.

The increased career opportunity for women is another important reason. They have acquired an increasing number of openings to work in highly paid jobs, which were earlier

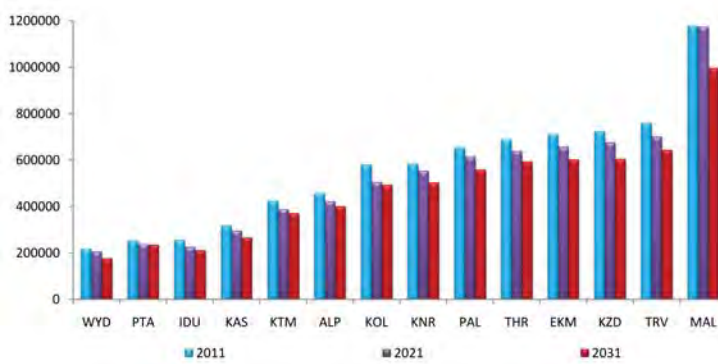
Expected cross over, Kerala (Children fall behind the Elderly)



Speed of Aging, Kerala 2011-21 (Population 60 and above)



Declining children, Kerala 2011-31 (Ages 0-14 Years)



Source: Estimated from Census of India (2011)

mainly upheld of only men. The description of child bearing and rearing has changed in Kerala; the living costs are higher now than in the past. It is probably paradoxical that increased economic growth in some of the families and richness with extravagant life in fact appears to give Malayalis a higher precedence thought about to the economic costs of having children.

People in Kerala have higher sanguinity about their living standards. The cost of raising children in Kerala is exceeding yet before. Hence, the new couples often choose to have 1 or 0 children to save the economic splurge of having children, and that now became a fashion in Kerala.

As discussed above, these grounds of changes created to limit

having number of children among couples and small families became advantageous to Malayali community. But equal experiences from the developed world, some of the demographically advanced countries, observed in the recent past that fewer children initially mean a reduction in the dependency ratios, but later overturned as a result of the numbers of elderly people on the rise. The major fact is that the cost of health care for elderly is greater than the educational costs for the young population in the organizational point of view.

The life expectancy of an elderly person at age 60 in Kerala is become nearly 20 years now. Can this growing population of older Malayalis, will be able to save for their retirement? What health care planning they must have? And how much it will cost? All are significant questions. Drug costs are unaffordable to a larger amount of elderly persons in Kerala, and can shove them to a low standard of living, and particularly the extremely poor, have higher their mortality rates. The hints are already made known in Kerala. These ambiguities must be certainly motivated to our future planning agendas. The population ageing effect is going to be an awful pressure on government budgets for healthcare and pension plans. As elderly population continuously increases in the State, there must be more than 25 percent of the state's output will consume for the pensions and health care costs. A thorough investigation is recommended to know more about the correlation between ageing demographics, healthcare policy, economic needs of the aged, and the health and economic conditions of the aged among the poor.

More broadly, as Kerala is running ahead to an ageing future, we could adopt the standards of some of the modern societies have coped well with higher proportion of the aged. In Kerala, families are continues to be crucial to elderly care, but the life expectancy and life time turn out to be more extended, no doubt, there will be distraction arising in our families, going to a change concerning to public arrangements comparable to that practicing in the modern developed parts of the societies which are demographically well along like to this small state - Kerala. ■

The writer is a Population Scientist based in Canada



To SCHOOL

The information and communication technology has made deep impacts in almost all fields of activities. The advancement gained by this technology during the past few decades far outweighs the progress it had achieved during its initial years of development. The technology has changed the ways of doing business, making communication, doing banking activities, knowledge transfer, and in carrying out routine works. The decision of the state government to introduce the tablet project in all government schools within a few years is a commendable step aimed to reap the immense benefits offered by the technology. Under the tablet project, the government will distribute tablet model personal computers to students of primary and secondary level classes. The project also aims to set up one smart classroom in all schools and gradually convert all classrooms to smart classrooms fitted with multimedia projectors, digital boards, state of the art multimedia gadgets and digital learning aids. The project will be

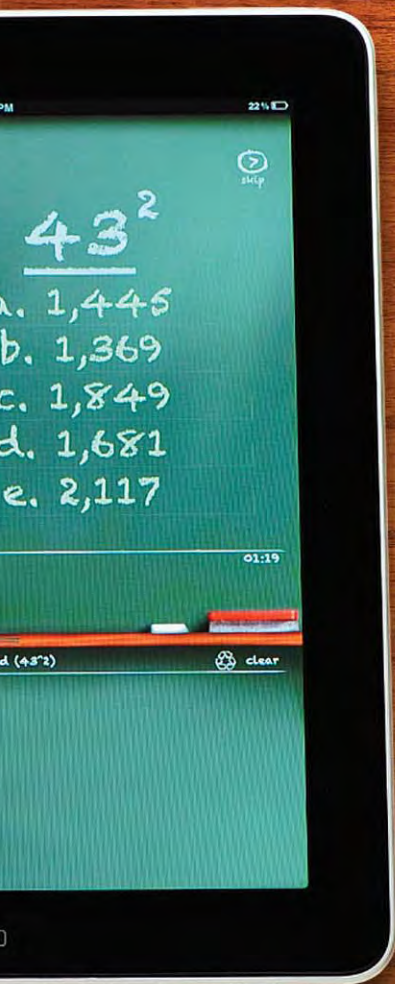


implemented in phases with the cooperation of local bodies, using funds from central government and with the help of parent teacher associations functioning in schools. This decision can be considered as a major step for bringing revolutionary changes in school education.

Our education system



WITH Tablets



has played a commendable role in bringing prosperity and progress to the society and has helped the students to win laurels in their activities and work areas. In tune with the changes in technology, several attempts were seen made at different time periods to introduce new methods and technologies in education

sector also. This attempt was to make learning by students as well as teaching by teachers easy, attractive, colourful and interactive. Due to these reasons the education system has changed over the years in its style and working methods. IT is already in use in education sector for streamlining the admission processes, conducting examinations, speeding up result declaration, and so on. With the tablet project, the government schools in Kerala are going to make the increased use of information technology to make use of the ample benefits provided by the technology. The initiative aims to make information technology a critical component in education activities thereby providing immense opportunities in teaching and learning processes.

Tablet computers are small sized personal computers and have several added features when compared to the common and ubiquitous desktop systems or laptops. These are compact in size and have touch screen interfaces. Using of tablets is easy since all the operations are done by touching on the monitor itself rather than using mouse or keyboards – the usual accessories used along with desktop systems. Only less training and support costs are needed for these devices. Due to their extremely small sizes these are highly portable. The most notable benefit of tablets is the increased productivity offered by these small devices. Tablets have large sized display than mobile phones. These are powered using





The introduction of tablets is aimed to achieve this goal. Tablets help storing several lessons and lecture notes in their own memory and help students to read and re-read them any number of times. The lesson content can be designed in a number of different attractive ways

chargeable type batteries and have built in camera, wireless connectivity and speakers. These can be used for a lot of other activities like search for data, make presentations, play games and hear audio. The Internet connectivity of tablets makes them always connected to the Internet. Special applications can be activated in these devices which enable the use of customized applications. The price of tablet depends on the features available in the model and now there are several choices available for selection.

Tablets entered the market with the launching of iPad by Apple company. During the initial years these were widely used for personal use and entertainment purposes. Later, these gadgets were found useful for varied applications and as result the use of tablets increased in

recent years and this increased their sales. Currently, tablets are found as perfect devices well suited for education, business, healthcare and Internet based activities. The world's cheapest tablet named Aakash was released in India during the year 2011. Aakash tablet weighs around 350 grams and is provided with wireless connectivity, microphone, messaging facility and has battery life of around 3 hours. These are available at reduced prices and subsidised version of Aakash will be made available to students through the central government project National Mission on Education through ICT (NME-ICT).

Education methods must change with the times and so the students. The introduction of tablets is aimed to achieve this goal. Tablets help storing several lessons and lecture

notes in their own memory and help students to read and re-read them any number of times. The lesson content can be designed in a number of different attractive ways using colourful pictures, photographs, animations, speeches and audio to suit the taste of the student. Students can visit suitable websites of learning and can download teaching materials, do exercises, make discussion, chat with experts, ask questions and clear doubts. Use of tablets helps students in avoiding the burden of carrying heavy books to school. The new trend in publishing sector is the release of books in digital formats and making them available in websites for download by users. Such digital books are known as electronic books or e-books in short. Now more books are published as e-books as this



trees for the manufacture of paper. A project to distribute e-text books free-of-cost to students is also under consideration by the government.

The wireless connectivity of tablets helps students in interacting with teachers always. Also, the interactivity and collaboration among students are increased with the use of wireless connectivity. Besides this, the work done by students can be projected in big screens for better viewing and for open discussion in class rooms. Students can also do the work in collaboration by using different online methods. Studies indicate that use of tablets for education purposes improves motivation and collaboration and enhances IT skills. Flexibility in study, space and time and increased creativity are the other advantages of using tablets.

The teachers are also benefited by the use of tablets in class rooms since the approach can be changed to an interactive, vibrant and colourful manner. Class room management and organization becomes easy affairs. The teaching can be imparted using visually and audio rich contents with the help of animations. The progress of students can be monitored regularly. Lecture notes and



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provides several advantages such as low cost of production, easy searching of contents and ability to organizing easily.

The ability to use active ink in tablets has many advantages for students. Teaching notes can be taken in their tablets in real time and can be continually saved in its memory. Use of digital en allows the creation of drawings and art works in their tablet screens. Students are not restricted to the limitations in the page size while using tablets. The work created by students can be easily erased as well as deleted with the pressing of a button, whenever required. The use of digital files for different purposes as well as e-books helps in saving the use of paper. This helps in making our environment greener due to less felling of

exercises can be distributed using electronic methods.

Students of this generation are tech-savvy and are interested in making use of the technological advantages and facilities to boost their knowledge and increase their career prospects. Use of information technology in schools helps students to create awareness in the effective use of information technology. Computer aided learning methods are already used in certain education purposes. Apart from these, the introduction of new technologies helps in widening the scope of education, connect with more people and make classroom learning attractive, enjoyable and never want to miss. ■

The writer is Technical Officer, University of Kerala, Trivandrum



Mission Accomplished



“I am relieved. Not only I, but everyone in Kerala,”
- Oommen Chandy, Chief Minister of Kerala

Ending days of tension and uncertainty, 45 Malayalee nurses and one from Tamilnadu stranded in the strife-torn Iraq, who were freed by Iraqi insurgents, arrived safely on 5th July bringing relief to their families waiting with bated breath for their return. And on arrival of the nurses, the mood was predictably emotional. The airport premises became a theatre of reunion even though the thoughts of uncertain future loomed over. Gleeful family members, some inconsolable out of fear and anxiety and still others quite sober resigning to the fact that things have finally turned out for the good. And while all these were happening, someone was heard saying: “We never imagined such a return, thanks to the Chief Minister and all who helped and prayed for us.”

A team of State officials led by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy

was present at the Nedumbassery airport sharing the joy. The authorities of Cochin Airport Limited (CIAL) and NoRKA saw to it that all necessary arrangements were done to welcome and send the returning nurses to their homes. The nurses thanked the chief minister and the government for the efforts taken to bring them back safely from Iraq. Marina, one of the nurses, met the chief minister with her parents and thanked him for her safe return. It was Marina who kept in touch with the chief minister and updated him with regard to the situation of the stranded nurses in Iraq.

“We need nothing more; our children have reached home unharmed. We are deeply indebted to you sir,” said Sashi Kumar, father of Sruthi S. Kumar the Malayali nurse, to Chief Minister Oommen Chandy with folded hands. “I am relieved. Not



It is a fact that the chief minister's unrelenting efforts made the rescue mission faster. Prior to the return of the nurses, the chief minister camped in New Delhi for two days, holding discussions with Union Minister for External Affairs Sushma Swaraj and coordinating with other officials of the ministry and the Indian embassy in Iraq.



only I, but everyone in Kerala," the Chief Minister replied.

It is a fact that the chief minister's unrelenting efforts made the rescue mission faster. Prior to the return of the nurses, the chief minister camped in New Delhi for two days, holding discussions with Union Minister for External Affairs Sushma Swaraj and coordinating with other officials of the ministry and the Indian embassy in Iraq. He was joined in this mission by his Cabinet colleagues Ramesh Chennithala, K M Mani and Manjalamkuzhi Ali. The timely

intervention of the State government and the crucial role played by the chief minister in the rescue mission of the stranded nurses was hailed by many. Following the successful mission, the chief minister attributed their smooth return to the deft and meticulous diplomacy of the Centre and State governments. "It's a victory of Indian diplomacy," thundered the leader.

He thanked the Union External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj for all her efforts to bring back the nurses to India and added that the evacuation of nurses from Iraq was a result of collective efforts. "It was a team work of Kerala government, the Centre and the Indian embassy in Baghdad and also the prompt action of the Union External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj that eventually resulted in evacuating the nurses from the strife torn Iraq. I am fully satisfied," said the chief minister.

A last moment hiccup resulted in anxious moments at Erbil by about 1 a.m. when landing permission was denied to the special aircraft from India.

After coming to learn about the situation Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, who kept awake throughout the night of July 4 intervened without losing time through the External Affairs ministry and resolved the situation.

The role of Minister for NoRKA K C Joseph was also commendable. The minister made sure that all necessary arrangements had been done by the officials of the Cochin International Airport and the Department of Non-resident Keralites' Affairs to receive the nurses from Iraq and take them to their respective destinations in Kerala. The customs and immigrations officials made it sure that the clearance procedure at the airport did not exceed half-an-hour. NoRKA provided an immediate financial assistance of Rs 5000 to each nurse and arrangements were also done at government guest houses for those who wanted to take rest and proceed.

As and when the issue came to his attention, Chief Minister Oommen Chandy wrote to the Prime Minister



stating that steps should be initiated to bring back Malayalees stranded in the strife-torn Iraq. In his letter, the chief minister pointed out that if required a special Air India flight may be arranged to bring them back. As the hospital authorities were demanding heavy cash compensation and the nurses were unable to pay for it, the chief minister in the letter requested the prime minister to instruct the Indian Embassy in Iraq to contact the hospital management and resolve the issue. The chief minister also urged the prime minister to seek the help and intervention of the UN and the Red Cross, if necessary.

The State government had taken a committed stand in bringing back the citizens safely. From day one onwards all possible efforts were on to bring back Malayalees stranded in Iraq. The Central government was asked to bear the cost of bringing back the stranded Malayalees and if this was not possible the State government clearly clarified that they would meet the expense. Moreover, the State government affirmed that it was ready to provide air tickets to those wanting to come back. Some of the Malayalees in Baghdad were prepared for reaching the airport and all they needed was tickets and the government was ready to provide them with online tickets.

The prime objective of the government was the safety of the nurses. As part of evacuating nurses from Iraq, Resident Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Additional Resident Commissioner Rachana Sha of Kerala government in New Delhi were at Erbil to take stock of the situation. The special flight which took off from Erbil International Airport by early morning on 5th July reached Mumbai by 8.43 a.m. and after a brief halt reached Kochi 12 noon.

With the safe return of all the nurses the State government and Chief Minister Oommen Chandy has proved that the welfare of its people remain paramount and are willing to go to any extent in ensuring that. ■





Monsoon Tourism in Kerala

Monsoon, the word itself, makes one happy. The intoxicating smell of the dry Earth getting drenched, the splashing waters and the tiny paper boats sailing on the clogged water make Monsoons the favourite season in India.

The Monsoon arrives in Kerala with all its pomp and vigour, like a majestic King returning to visit his subjects after a long time. The parched land and the shrivelled trees wait anxiously for the rain, but it is the dried leaves on the floor that give the King the royal welcome by dancing and swaying in the wind. They jump up and down and flip around in happiness, knowing very well that their happiness is



short-lived and that in a few days, they would be returned to mother earth. The first rain also gives that special smell, so unique that we never get anywhere else.

The diversity of the geographical features of the State has resulted in a corresponding diversity in climate. The High Ranges have a cool and bracing climate throughout the year, while the plains are hot and humid. The average level of annual rainfall is quite high when compared to other Indian States, almost three times higher than in Karnataka while twice that in Tamilnadu. The State basically enjoys 4 types of climate such as Winter, Summer, South West Monsoon and North East Monsoon.

SouthWestMonsoon

The South West Monsoon begins either in the end of May or in the beginning of June and fades out by September. Moving towards north, this seems to gain intensity. During this period Peerumedu in Idukki and Vaithiri-Kuttiyadi range in Malabar receive the highest rainfall. The rainfall is comparatively low in the Lakshadweep Islands. In the southern areas, the Monsoon is around 40-50 per cent and in the northern areas it is around 80 per cent.

NorthEastMonsoon

The NorthEast Monsoon



commences in October, dry weather setting in by the end of December. The Kanjirappalli-Peerumedu range and Kuttiyadi area experience the abundance of NorthEast Monsoon. The northern parts of the State account for a mere 10 per cent of the annual rainfall. As the rains engulf Kerala with the annual dose of wetness and luxuriance, the weathermen may be tearing their hair out, wondering if this year's monsoon rainfall will match their predictions, but one class of people will be celebrating the drops of seasonal precipitation - tour and travel operators and, of course, their clients, the tourists from within and beyond the country, who come to savour the delights of God's Own Country.

Monsoon Tourism in Kerala

The Monsoon tourists come at a time, as Kerala Tourism energetically points out, at the time "when the heavens touch the earth." Yes, it is that magical time of year when the South West Monsoon casts its spell over the land of coconuts for three months. And, increasingly, visitors from outside the State are learning to enjoy the special treats that accompany the Monsoon. And these range from the mundane, like shopping for a range of umbrellas to simply sipping tea and watching the boatmen ferry across the backwaters to the adventurous, like trekking in the western Ghats for some diehard nature-watching. But, these days, what is really bringing the smiles to the faces of Kerala's tourism professionals is the beelines for Kerala's Ayurvedic health

centres. Traditionally, according to Ayurvedic physicians, rejuvenation therapies have their best effect during the Wet Monsoon months, when the winds and the cold temperature render the body especially amenable to the therapeutic and restorative powers of the herbs and concoctions used in Ayurveda. That is why upcountry visitors throng Kerala's Ayurveda spas during the rainy months. Yes, the natural synergy between the Monsoon and Ayurveda is finally stretching the traditional tourism season in Kerala, so much so that today the State's hoteliers can boast that there is no off-season in Kerala, just a peak season and the green season. Kerala, it appears, is well on the way to perfecting "Monsoon tourism."

Already, Kerala Tourism has begun aggressively marketing the Monsoon. Soon it will launch a Rs 30-lakh advertising campaign in national newspapers that will promote "value for money" packages to Kerala during the months of July, August and September. The campaign will be initially run in the Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkatta, Pune and Chennai markets. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) recently proposed Monsoon tourism as a means of providing a fillip to the travel industry during conventionally lean months. Normally, the monsoon results in hotel and resort occupancies dropping by nearly 50 per cent and revenues of travel and domestic tour operators shrinking drastically. CII believes THAT it is imperative to

identify States that can be sold as monsoon destinations.

Kerala is naturally and uniquely poised to cash in on the heavenly phenomenon. Better still, the State has another annual Monsoon to fall back on, as it were - the Northeast Monsoon, also called the retreating Monsoon, which occurs from October to November, lesser in intensity than the principal Southwest Monsoon, but equally enchanting. Between these two monsoons, Kerala can hope to lure in hundreds of men and women who long for an invigorating spell of rejuvenation and healing. And since they are unlikely to be stingy with their wallets, as they heal their bodies, minds and souls, Kerala's tourism and travel industry will be the winners, too.

Monsoon, the word itself, makes one happy. The intoxicating smell of the dry Earth getting drenched, the splashing waters and the tiny paper boats sailing on the clogged water make Monsoons the favourite season in India. After the long summer months, when the heat and the dust ruled the roost, the monsoons are a welcome change. The farmers rejoice in the showers that promise to bring them prosperity. Feel the magic of Monsoon- Monsoons the season of rainbows and raindrops-is certainly not to be wasted indoors. The very special season of the year, Monsoon brings everything to you fresh. The washed streets and the fresh leaves seem to smile with you. Getting wet, splashing and swimming or wading through knee-deep waters, and sailing





paper boats, are some little deeds you may indulge in. We may try out an Ayurveda vacation in the monsoon too. The best way to rejuvenate our soul and replenish our body, Ayurvedic therapy is a great option for monsoons. Monsoon is a season for rejuvenation, when the people take special diet and ayurvedic therapies for rejuvenation and longevity. According to Ayurveda, monsoon is an ideal season to take treatments for various diseases.

All over, we can see the joy of monsoon on everyone's faces: kids dancing on streets, elders enjoying rain from the sit-out of their house and, what else, the people sharing a common umbrella on the public place. Traditionally, the advent of the monsoon has meant a sharp fall in the number of tourists visiting Kerala. However, Kerala Tourism is now working on a new 'Monsoon campaign' to attract visitors to the State during the rainy season. Over the past two or three years, Kerala Tourism has quietly worked to attract tourists to the State during the 'off season',

especially the Monsoon. Monsoons in Kerala are the most enchanting in India. With green pastures at their best, Kerala is the most sought-after destination during rainy season. The State is promoting itself extensively in the field of health tourism, especially Ayurveda. The equable climate during Monsoon and natural abundance of herbs and medicinal plants in its flora, Kerala is fast capturing the attention of international tourists as a prime destination to visit during the Monsoon season, with its abundant water reservoir of waterfalls and natural lakes. Northeastern region is also fast emerging as a hot Monsoon destination for locals as well as international tourists. Kerala Tourism is also working out a schedule of events to be conducted across the State during the Monsoon months. A 'Monsoon Food Festival', a music festival, and a theatre festival are some of the events being planned. Kerala Tourism is also looking at organising a folklore festival, as many of Kerala folk traditions and arts are strongly associated with the

Monsoon. The romance of the Monsoon, with its abundant rains and lush green landscape that has been rhapsodized down the ages in verse and song, can be promoted as a "unique" tourist attraction.

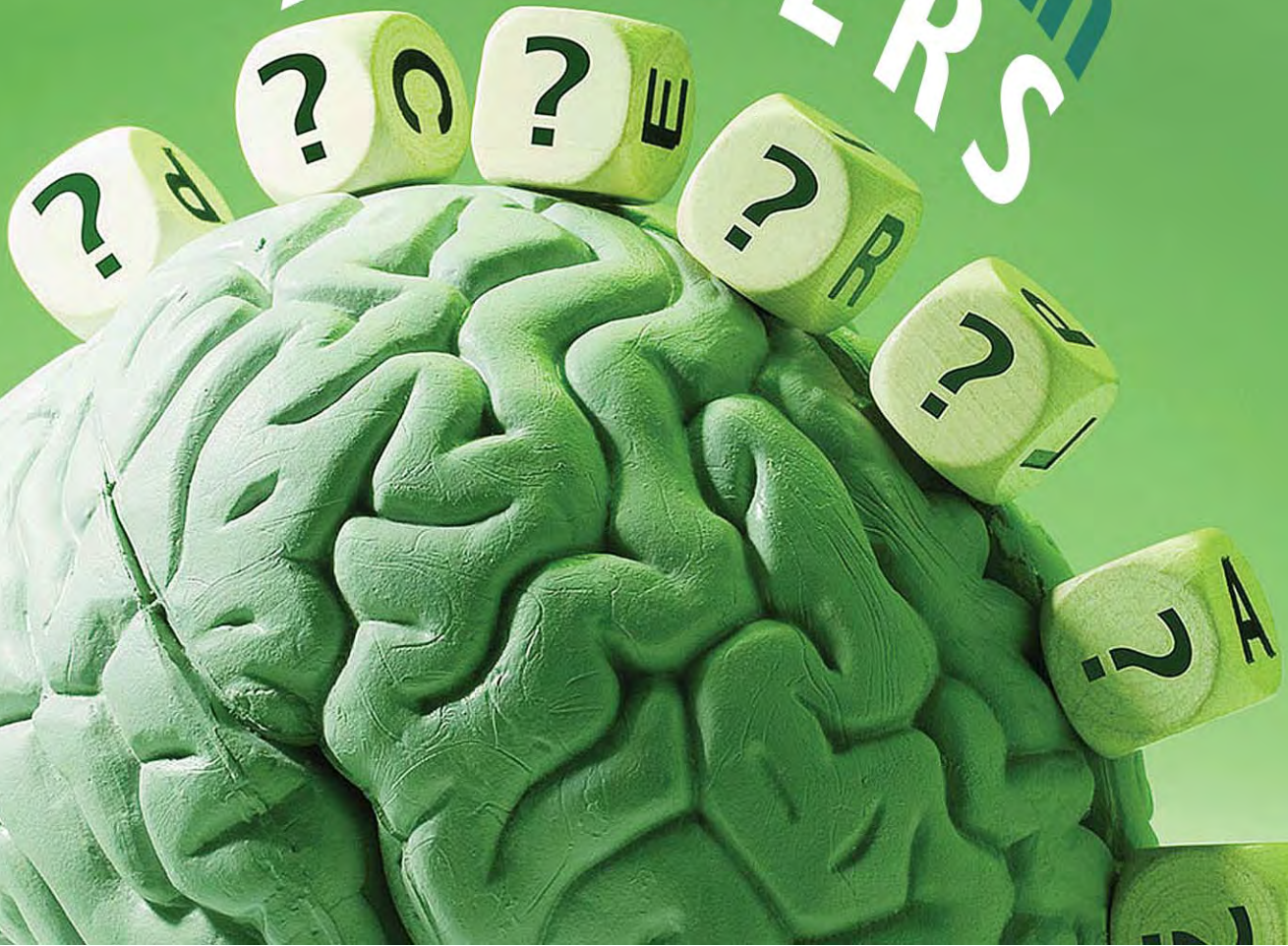
The Monsoon attracts a number of tourists into Kerala by its charming and heavenly beauty of rain and dark clouds, along with the rain and perfumed smell of the breeze. The State has tremendous scope for promoting the monsoon tourism by taking necessary steps for marketing this heavenly-seasonal beauty offered by nature. We need to polish this amazing gift offered by God and nature to attract tourists to God's Own Country and to promote our land as Monsoon tourism destination by introducing special schemes to attract tourists within the country and all over the world. These schemes will generate new employment avenues and also help the Government earn precious foreign exchange that international tourists will spend during their stay in Kerala. ■



Young people are the vital and designed and co-ordinated based on the vibrant force, competent to distinct socio-economic condition of accelerate and activate the the youths. Non- availability of growth and development of opportunities, disparities in services any nation. To equip them to and dissuading situations are the become competent to involve in the substantial factors that relegate process of socialization and community development. The 'World Programme development, well planned and of Action for Youth' (WPAY), which is appropriate initiatives are to be an initiative by the UNO, looks in to



Mental Health MATTERS



the discrepancies to maintain comfort and promote livelihood of young people. International Youth Day, which is being observed on August 12th every year, is one of such initiative by WPAY.

Background

The history of IYD goes back to 1985 when the UN General Assembly declared the year 1985 as the 'International Youth Year' (IYY). 'Participation, development and peace' was the slogan of the IYY. In 1995, World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) was established to provide a policy frame work and practical guidance for national action and international support to improve the access to opportunities and constructive participation of youth in

in the society.

The idea of International Youth Day was proposed in 1991 by young people who were gathered in Vienna, Austria, for the UN's World Youth Forum. The forum recommended that an International Youth Day be declared, especially for fund raising and promotional purposes, to support the United Nations Youth Fund in partnership with youth organizations. In 1998 a resolution proclaiming August 12 as International Youth Day was adopted as part of WPAY activities during the World Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth activities. That recommendation was endorsed by the UN General Assembly on 17th December 1999 and decided

The slogan of the IYD- 2014 is 'Mental health matters', which is based on the theme 'Youth and Mental health'. In general, mental health issues refer to clinically significant patterns of behavioural deviations or abnormal emotional functioning that is associated with some level of need, distress, suffering or impairment faced by a person in one or more areas of functioning such as school, family, work place, or society.

the society. 'Then the world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond' was initiated to address more effectively, the problems of young people all over the world, and to increase opportunities for their participation in society. The implementation of WPAY was entrusted to the international community, non-governmental agencies, and public and private sector undertakings' with particular emphasis on youth organisations all over the world. Today, it focuses to initiate measures to strengthen the competency of young people and to increase the quality and quantity of opportunities available to them for effective and constructive participation

to observe IYD every year on August 12th from the year 2000.

International Youth Day-2014

The slogan of the IYD- 2014 is 'Mental health matters', which is based on the theme 'Youth and Mental health'. In general, mental health issues refer to clinically significant patterns of behavioural deviations or abnormal emotional functioning that is associated with some level of need, distress, suffering or impairment faced by a person in one or more areas of functioning such as school, family, work place, or society. Disability due to mental and behavioural conditions are the leading causes of ill-health in young people in both developed and



Symptoms of mental illness

Some preliminary symptoms of mental illness are:

- Increased absenteeism with out a genuine reason.
- Sudden fall in school performance
- Head ache, stomach ache etc., without any physical health problem
- Use of drugs and excessive alcohol
- Unusual change in personal grooming up
- Frequent outbursts of anger
- Withdrawal from friends and family members and isolation
- Less sleep
- Change in eating habits and poor appetite
- Sustained depression and negative mood and attitude
- Risk taking activities including delinquent, thrill seeking or promiscuous behaviour
- Low energy level, poor concentration or frequent complaints of boredom.
- Thefts, destruction, bunking off from activities etc.
- Loss of enjoyment from favourite activities
- Fear of becoming obese, though body weight is less than needed
- Marked difference in any personal behaviour



developing countries, that accounts one third decrease in productivity every year (WHO, 2008). There are number of reasons for the deterioration of mental health. It may be the demand of out put from an activity, unfulfilled expectations, inability to cop with situations, inter-personal problems, family relations, family set-up, unemployment, impact of some incidents, peer-pressure, job related issues etc. It is estimated that approximately 20 per cent of adolescents and youth in the world experience some sort of mental illness.

Common mental illness among youth

Mental-health problems such as depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, disruptive behavioural disorders, attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity disorder, mood disturbances, substance abuse, suicidal behaviour, aggressive behaviour, disruptive behaviour etc., are the leading causes of adjustment problems in adolescents and young people worldwide. With appropriate help,

many people with mental illness can recover and lead a healthy and productive life. Some of the prevalent and significant mental illness in adolescents is discussed below.

1. Depression: Many times, due to various reasons, sadness and unhappiness remain for long time, leading to depression. Most of the adolescents or their parents are not aware that they are experiencing the symptoms of a potential illness that needs treatment. At least one in four adolescents experiences symptoms of depression (Kessler and others, 2005), which commonly includes irritability, anger and avoidance of social interaction.

2. Anxiety: Anxiety disorder keeps away the adolescents from school, from groups and also from various activities due to fear or feeling of uncertainty. It is also visible with some physical symptoms such as stomach aches, racing heart, headaches, body pain etc. Anxiety can also be tied to some past trauma such as an accident, abuse etc.

3. Risk taking behaviour: Risk taking behaviour includes use of alcohol, substance abuse, thrill seeking, aberrant behaviours' etc. These types of behaviours are often symptomatic of some basic ental illness that can also result in accident or death.

4. Conduct disorders: Conduct disorders are a complicated group of behavioural and emotional problems in adolescents and youth. These teens and youth have great difficulty to follow the rules and behave properly based on the socially accepted norms. They may show ager frequently, often becomes aggressive to peers and adults, and may lie, steal, destroy property and exhibit sexually inappropriate activities.

5. Suicidal tendency: Depression and suicidal tendency often go hand in hand. While some suicidal behaviour may be impulsive, all indicators of suicidal thoughts and actions should be taken very seriously. In India, Kerala is the worst affected state with more suicidal behaviour. Suicide is the fifth highest cause of death in this age group globally, and



Study on mental health conducted by the UNDESA

The study conducted by UNDESA (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs) in 2013 to address the challenges faced by young people with mental health issues revealed the following.

1. Young people are at greater risk of a range of mental-health conditions as they transit from childhood to adulthood.
2. Mental-health conditions in young people impact negatively their development, quality of life and ability to participate fully in their communities.
3. Mental and behavioural conditions are the leading causes of health problems in young people in both high- and low- resource countries, accounting for one third of all years lost productivity due to disability
4. Mental-health problems increase the likelihood of poverty, limit employment opportunities severely, and impact work performance negatively.
5. Help-seeking behaviour comes less readily to young people, who may be even more impacted by stigma, embarrassment and the lack of basic knowledge about mental health.

second highest in high-income countries

Effectiveness of preliminary interventions

Among the preliminary interventions, Life Skills Training Programme, Good Behaviour Game,

Coping Power Programme, Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS), some community based programmes such as Youth Mentoring Initiatives, Communities that Care approach etc. are found useful. Some

interventions such as depression screening, outreach and treatment etc., have been shown to yield financial benefits to employers in addition to the individual mental health benefits to .

How to help and Where to get help

The first and most important step to extent help for mental illness is the comprehensive assessment by qualified professional who collect information from parents, school, peers and other relevant sources. Treatment can include, skill imbibing and skill up gradation programmes, individual psychotherapy or if needed family or group therapy and psychiatric medication based on the nature and intensity of illness. You can be an activist in this area by looking for signs and symptoms of mental illness from friends, colleagues, relatives, neighbours etc., and helping them to reach out to a counsellor, social worker, psychologist, psychiatrist for further support and assistance.

It is observed that mental health issues have been scrupulously neglected by governments and policymakers. Approximately one third of the countries lack mental-health budgets, and many allocate less than one per cent of their overall health budget to mental health. The lower-income countries spend a smaller overall proportion of health funds on mental health than higher-income countries. More defined policies and programmes have the potential to improve youths' access to a full range of services.

Early prevention efforts' including targeting risk factors in early childhood is necessary. Efforts are needed to overcome stigma regarding the mental health conditions of youth at the societal level. This should include training for practitioners and families, in order to create the opportunity of accessing services. Improved surveillance and programme monitoring and evaluation will aid in the identification of risk of youth mental-health conditions, as well as of protective factors to be targeted through preventive interventions. ■

The writer is former Deputy Director, Nehru Yuva Kendra



Genes Help Tibetans at High Altitudes

A gene acquired from an extinct cousin of modern humans is responsible for helping Tibetans adapt to high altitudes, according to a new research published by Nature. Scientists from the University of California, Berkeley and Chinese genomics organization BGI-Shenzhen found that Tibetans acquired the ability when their ancestors mated with Denisovans or individuals related to the now-extinct species. This is said to be the first time that a gene originating from a different species has been essentially proven to have helped modern humans adapt to the environment around them.

The variant in question is involved with the regulation of haemoglobin production in the body, affecting the molecule that is responsible for transporting oxygen in the blood. It became widespread several thousands of years ago, when Tibetans first relocated to the high-altitude plateau, and has allowed them to survive at elevations of more than 15,000 feet, despite the lack of oxygen and the tendency for people to develop cardiovascular problems.

Scorpions are Engineers!

Israeli scientists have discovered that scorpion burrows have a platform on which to warm up before the evening hunt. The researchers investigated the burrows of wild large-clawed Scorpions in the Negev Desert of Israel. After trapping the scorpions, they prepared replica casts of their burrows by filling them with molten aluminium. Once the casts had solidified, they were then dug out to be analyzed by 3D laser scanner and computer software.

Rather than being simple holes in the ground, it was found that the burrows followed a very sophisticated



Plastic Debris filled Oceans

The Malaspina Expedition, led by the Spanish National Research Council, have demonstrated that there are five large accumulations of plastic debris in the open ocean that match with the five major twists of oceanic surface water circulation. In addition to the known accumulation of plastic waste in the North Pacific, there are similar accumulations in the central North Atlantic, the South Pacific, the South

Atlantic and the Indian Ocean.

However, central surface waters of the oceans may not be the final destination of plastic debris since large amounts of micro plastics could be passing to the marine food chain and the ocean floor. Ocean currents carry plastic objects which split into smaller and smaller fragments due to solar radiation. Those little pieces of plastic, known as micro plastics, can last hundreds of years and were detected in 88% of the ocean surface sampled during the Malaspina Expedition 2010. The major residues found are polyethylene and polypropylene, polymers used in the manufacture of everyday products like bags, food and beverage containers, kitchen utensils and toys, among others.

Ageing Cure for Flowers

Japanese scientists say they have found a way to slow down the ageing process in flowers by up to a half, meaning bouquets could remain fresh for much longer. Researchers at the National Agriculture and Food Research Organisation in Tsukuba, east of Tokyo, said

they had found the gene believed to be responsible for the short shelf-life of flowers in one Japanese variety of morning glory.

"Morning glory" is the popular name for a hundreds of species of flowering plants whose short-lived blooms usually unfold early in the day



design. Each burrow began from the environment to with a short, vertical entrance shaft that flattened out a few centimetres below the surface into a horizontal platform. The researchers believe that this provides a safe, warm place for the scorpions to increase their body temperature before they leave the burrow to forage at night. Scorpions rely on energy

from the environment to regulate their internal temperature. The burrows then turn sharply downwards, descending further below ground to form a dead-ended chamber. Being cool and humid, this chamber provides a refuge for the scorpions to rest during the heat of the day, where evaporative water loss is minimal.



Ocean on Saturn, Moon Salty as Dead Sea

Scientists analyzing data from NASA's Cassini mission have firm evidence the ocean inside Saturn's largest moon, Titan, might be as salty as the Earth's Dead Sea. The new results come from a study of gravity and topography data collected during Cassini's repeated flybys of Titan during the past 10 years. Using the

Cassini data, researchers presented a model structure for Titan, resulting in an improved understanding of the structure of the moon's outer ice shell.

Additional findings support previous indications the moon's icy shell is rigid and in the process of freezing solid. Researchers found that a relatively high density was required for Titan's ocean in order to explain the gravity data. This indicates the ocean is probably an extremely salty brine of water mixed with dissolved salts likely composed of sulphur, sodium and potassium. The density indicated for this brine would give the ocean a salt content roughly equal to the saltiest bodies of water on Earth.



Cesarean Babies have Risk of Diseases



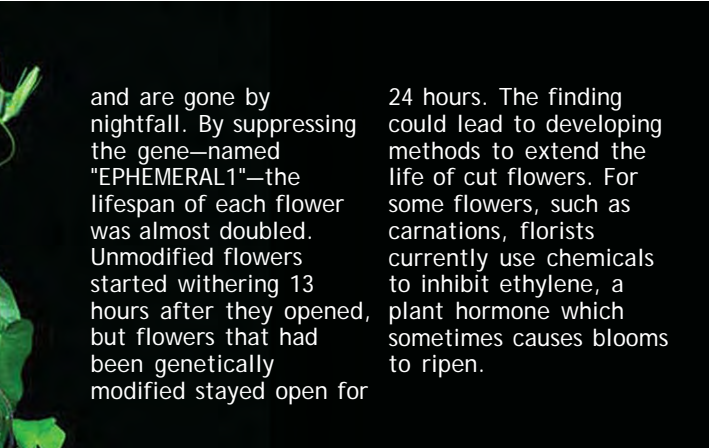
The mode of delivery could make an imprint in the stem cells of the newborn infant, says a new study. This adds to the understanding why individuals born by caesarean section statistically have an increased risk of immunological diseases. Delivery by elective caesarean section is increasing drastically worldwide, and is today the most common surgical procedure in fertile women. Among those born by caesarean section, an increased risk of certain diseases, such as asthma, type 1-diabetes, obesity, and celiac disease, has been noticed. To date, the causes of this statistical association have not been clarified. Epigenetic changes in the DNA of the cell nucleus occur when environmental factors affects the way the genes are encoded without altering the actual genetic code. Thus, genes can be

switched on and off to adapt body functions following the necessities of the surrounding environment. Today, we know that toxic substances or diet can cause epigenetic changes, which in some cases can even be passed on to the next generation.

In the current study researchers investigated epigenetic alterations in stem cells from sorted cord blood. Global epigenetic analysis was then done from 43 infants, of whom 18 were delivered by caesarean section. Finally, DNA from 12 infants (6 cesarean sections) was analysed for genome-wide locus-specific epigenetic states. The result shows specific epigenetic differences between the groups in almost 350 DNA regions, including genes known to be involved in processes controlling metabolism and immune defence.

and are gone by nightfall. By suppressing the gene—named "EPHEMERAL1"—the lifespan of each flower was almost doubled. Unmodified flowers started withering 13 hours after they opened, but flowers that had been genetically modified stayed open for

24 hours. The finding could lead to developing methods to extend the life of cut flowers. For some flowers, such as carnations, florists currently use chemicals to inhibit ethylene, a plant hormone which sometimes causes blooms to ripen.





A Leap Towards Healthy



To build a healthy future free from preventable diseases, the younger generation needs to be oriented and guided through the right path. The next generation should learn from the mistakes and bitter experiences of the past and it is the responsibility of every individual to lead our children in the right direction.

Aim

To control and prevent occurrence and prevalence of lifestyle diseases in school children by empowering them through health education, life style modification and regular screening.

The number of persons with any reduction in lifestyle diseases is increasing in Kerala. The state run NCD control program (Amrutam Arogyam) has identified a shocking number of new lifestyle disease patients through its regular screening program which is ongoing in the state since 2012 covering all districts up to the grassroot level. The well oiled machinery of state Health Department churns out the data of new Hypertensive and diabetic patients every month adding to the existing pool of these diseases, springing up serious concern on the health, social and economic status of the state.

Finding new cases, offering treatment at door step and preventing them from slipping to complications were the major objectives of the NCD control program which has been successfully implemented in the state but reducing the number of new cases to bring down the burden of NCD is the cardinal issue which was not addressed in the earlier program. The only answer for this problem is primordial prevention and since

any reduction in prevalence in near future needs sustainable concrete action at present, the target group is undoubtedly children and adolescents who are the future citizens of the country

In a recent survey conducted by the school health program of NRHM in Government schools covering a total of One million children, 2.7% was found to be overweight and 0.8% had obesity. Similarly a study conducted by the Nutrition research centre in the schools also supported the findings, in terms of nutritional status of school children. Unhealthy dietary pattern, lack of

exercise and increasing stress which is imposed on children by the parents and society has made our children vulnerable to life style diseases. The competition in the field of education has prevented children from outdoor activities in schools as well as homes. Excessive use of junk foods among children has compounded to this and many lifestyle diseases are getting prevalent even at their early age. Addiction to tobacco and alcohol and initiation of these habits at a younger age group complicated the existing health issues in children.

The initiative for catching them callous was taken by state Health department which was declared by Health Minister on World Health day 2013 and was included in the seven point program announced by the ministry on its second anniversary and LEAP (Lifestyle Disease Education and



Future

Awareness Program) was introduced. The program was officially inaugurated on 9th December 2013.

Modus Operandi

The school Health Nurse will coordinate the activities in the school by collecting the list of students and fixing a venue and time for medical checkup. The children and the teachers will be given education on healthy lifestyle changes, diet, exercise and ill effects of smoking and alcohol. The Medical Officer from the local PHC/CHC or any expert in the subject will

encouraged and steps will be taken to advocate the school authorities to make PT hours and outdoor exercises mandatory.

Voluntary groups like, NCC, SCOUT and NSS to be entrusted with task of spreading NCD Message. Children are the best medium for health education specially to disseminate knowledge to the society.

Monitoring

The activities will be monitored by Health department and Education department. The school Health Program and State NCD control program jointly evaluate the activities at the state level.

Kerala had witnessed a generation spoiled by unhealthy life style changes. The white collar job culture, sedentary lifestyle, adopting western dietary pattern, use of tobacco and alcohol to deplorable heights and stress crossing all limits have culminated in exploding number of NCDs including

Work Plan

The program has seven work plans which have to be implemented in the schools.

- Education on diet, exercise and habits at schools for teachers and schools. The teachers and students will be educated on healthy diet, need for physical education and harmful effects of Alcohol and Tobacco.
- Encourage the school management to provide outdoor exercise facility at schools.

Most of the schools owing to the stiff competition in education offers less importance for PT hours and outdoor games and many schools even don't have a play ground or fitness centres. The school authorities and PTA s will be advocated for initiating steps towards this.

- Encourage exercise by promoting walking to schools and cycling to schools.
- Vegetable gardening and healthy cooking class in schools

This will encourage children to follow healthy food and also will promote physical exertion.

- Yoga and PT hours to be made compulsory
- Screening for lifestyle diseases

Yoga and aerobics can be done indoor and can be introduced even for schools which do not have play grounds

Screening all children for lifestyle diseases and special attention for the children in high risk category

- Health education to public using children

Children are the best medium for disseminating health messages to the family and community and they may be properly oriented and empowered.

State Abstract on January 2014



Particulars	Numbers
Total Population	3,33,87,677
Target Population	170,27,715
Persons screened	71,94,113
New Diabetes detected	3,24,368
New Hypertension detected	3,97,167
Hypertension and diabetes	2,06,073
% of population screened	42.25%

Data of screening (NCD) from april2012 to December 2013)

conduct screening and health education part. Health workers and medical officer along with dietician to be made available for health education class on a regular basis at schools focusing on teachers, students and parents.

The children who are vulnerable to lifestyle diseases will be monitored by the teacher and special advice on diet and exercise will be given to them and they will be monitored on regular basis. Vegetable gardening and cooking classes on healthy diet will be

cancer, which have claimed many lives and confined many to beds and medical life supports and also imposing heavy financial burden to the society. To build a healthy future free from preventable diseases, the younger generation needs to be oriented and guided through the right path. The next generation should learn from the mistakes and bitter experiences of the past and it is the responsibility of every individual to lead our children in the right direction. In this context the initiative of Health department is definitely a leap towards future. ■



KINFRA Leads the way

The burgeoning industrial sector of the state owes a lot to Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (KINFRA) a statutory body formed by the Government of Kerala in 1993. KINFRA aims at developing the essential infrastructure for various industries.

Infrastructure development is often considered a key measure of and instrument for economic growth. Quality infrastructure is imperative for the overall economic development of a country. Infrastructure contributes to economic development and enhances the quality of life. Infrastructure services are intermediate inputs to production and any reduction in these input costs raises the profitability of production, thus permitting higher levels of output, income and employment. Looking forward, there is an increasing emphasis on instituting public-private partnership to close part of India's infrastructure gap. The success of any infrastructure facility depends on the demand and the industry profile. Further, every state has a distinct locational advantage or constraint, which decides on the demand pattern and the ultimate viability of industrial infrastructure projects.

The Kerala Government have



already adopted a proactive role in the industrial development as part of the Government's efforts towards the promotion of the industries and direction of environment. A major part of the new investment will be directed towards the industrial parks already agreed are to be set up in various parts of the State. There will be specialised parks, where requisite infrastructure as well as common facilities will be provided. Kerala has always maintained a unique status. Its social development indicators are on par with developed countries, it has attained total literacy and has a well-developed social infrastructure. The 1998 Nobel laureate in economics, Amartya Sen, has held in high esteem the 'Kerala model of development' and the strong social infrastructure creation.

The burgeoning industrial sector of the state owes a lot to Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (KINFRA) a statutory body formed by the Government of Kerala in 1993. KINFRA aims at developing the essential infrastructure for various industries. The industrial parks developed by KINFRA have

Projects completed

KINFRA International Apparel Park, Menamkulam, Thiruvananthapuram (45 acres)

KINFRA Film & Video Park, Thiruvananthapuram (50 acres)

KINFRA Export Promotion Industrial Park (KEPIP), Kochi (90 acres)

KINFRA Food Processing Park, Kakkancherry, Malappuram (30 acres)

KINFRA Neo Space, Kakkancherry, Malappuram (85,000 sq. ft)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Menamkulam, Trivandrum (40 acres)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Mazhuvannur, Ernakulam (65 acres)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Koratty, Thrissur (30 acres)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Kalpetta, Wayanad (50 acres)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Thalassery, Kannur (50 acres)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Seethangoli, Kasargod (60 acres)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Kunnamthanam, Pathanamthitta (36 acres)

KINFRA Small Industries Park, Adoor, Pathanamthitta (35 acres)

KINFRA Food Processing Park, Adoor, Pathanamthitta (50 acres)

KINFRA Textile Centre, Nadukani, Kannur (126 acres)

SEZ for Animation & Gaming, KINFRA Film & Video Park, Trivandrum (25 acres)

Expansion of KINFRA International Apparel Park, Trivandrum under APES scheme

Rural Apparel Park, Rajakumari, Idukki



Joint Venture Projects

- Rubber Park, Irapuram, Ernakulam - JV with Rubber Board
- Seafood Park, Aroor - JV of MPEDA & KINFRA with Seafood exporters association
- Western India KINFRA Ltd, Palakkad - J V with Kalpaka Infrastructure Ltd.
- ICICI-KINFRA (I-KIN) - JV with ICICI Limited
- KINESCO, Kakkanad - JV with NTPC Electrical Supply Co. Ltd.
- INKEL-KINFRA Infrastructure Projects Limited - JV with INKEL
- Care Keralam, JV Ayurvedic manufacturers



Ongoing Projects

- Biotechnology Park, Kalamassery, Ernakulam (50 acres)
- KINFRA Integrated Industrial & Textile Park, Palakkad (200 acres)
- International Animation School at KINFRA Film & Video Park, Trivandrum (4.5 acres)
- SEZ for Electronics Industries at KINFRA Hi-Tech Industries Park, Kochi (25 acres)
- SEZ for Food Processing at KINFRA Food Processing Park, Kakkancherry (30 acres)
- External Water Supply Scheme, Kasargod and Palakkad
- Marine Park, Beypore
- Rural Apparel Parks
- KINFRA industrial Park, Piravanthoor, Kollam (formerly TPIL)
- KINFRA Industrial Park, Kuttippuram (formerly KSDC)
- Advanced Technology Park, Ramanattukara, Kozhikode & Puzhakkal padam, Thrissur
- State Food Processing Mission



Park (JV with MPEDA) at Alappuzha, KINESCO, Kochi (JV With NTPC Electric Supply Company Ltd. a wholly owned subsidiary company of NTPC Limited), Kottayam Port & Container Terminal Services Private Limited (KPACT), Kottayam (JV with South Indian Chamber of commerce and Industry (SICCI), Kottayam), Western India KINFRA Ltd. (WISE Park) at Palakkad. and A Joint Venture Company between KINFRA and ICICI known as I-KIN to identify and facilitate the development of infrastructure projects in the State.

Townships/Zones etc, across the State.

The industry specific parks established by KINFRA provide ready-made manufacturing environment to facilitate easy start up of industrial units with minimum time and cost. There is also a Single Window Clearance mechanism inside the KINFRA Parks. It is constituted for the purpose of speedy issue of various licenses, clearances, and certificates required for various State enactments for setting up units in the Parks without any hassles.

The past 21 years have seen KINFRA set up 20 theme based Industrial Parks in Kerala in areas such as garments, infotainment, marine & seafood, rubber, exports, electronics, Textiles, Bio-Technology, food processing, and SME sector. It also includes India's first International Apparel Park in Thiruvananthapuram, India's first Export Promotion Industrial Park in Ernakulam, India's first Infotainment Park, the KINFRA Film & Video Park, in Thiruvananthapuram, India's first Food Processing Industrial Park in Malappuram and Hi-tech Park in Kochi etc.

KINFRA has developed Joint Venture Projects like India's first Rubber Park (JV with Rubber Board) at Kochi, India's first Seafood processing

KINFRA has developed various parks under different schemes of GOK/GOI. KINFRA is the Nodal Agency for the Ministry of Food Processing Industry and the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India.

Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industries, appointed KINFRA as the nodal agency of the State for implementing "Assistance to States for Infrastructure Development of Exports and Allied Activities" (ASIDE) Government of India.

Govt. of Kerala has appointed KINFRA as the Nodal Agency for the Kannur International Airport and NIFT, Kannur. Kerala is on the threshold of maximizing its export revenue by attracting new business ventures with special focus on value addition of its products and services. With this perspective, the Government is very keen and focused to set up more Industrial Parks in the State, which enables investment employment generation and also enhance export earnings.

facilities like developed land or built-up space, dedicated power, water supply, round the clock security, communication facilities, etc. thus providing ready-made manufacturing environment for industrial units with minimum time and cost.

KINFRA acquires land at strategic locations for the orderly development of industries by balancing social, cultural, regional and ecological requirements. KINFRA's achievement over the years caters to the industry specific infrastructure requirements, by setting up a number of Industrial Parks/



New initiatives

Electronics Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) in Kochi

The EMC project is proposed to set up in 75 acres of land in Kakkanad, Kochi at an estimated cost of Rs.250 crores (including land cost). An in-principle approval has obtained from the Dept. of Electronics and IT, Govt. of India. The detailed Project Report is being prepared and will be completed in June, 2014. The project will commence in July, 2014 and shall be completed in a short span of two years with a Govt. of India support of Rs. 50 crores for infrastructure development.

Global Ayurveda Village

As part of promotion of Ayurveda in the State, KINFRA proposes to set up a Global Ayurveda Village in two phases. The land acquisition for phase I in Thonnakkal Village in Trivandrum has been completed. The total project cost of phase one is Rs.30 crores. The

Detailed Project Report is complete. The construction activities of phase I project will commence on October, 2014. The land acquisition in Varkala as part of phase II development has been initiated.

Mega Food Park, Palakkad

KINFRA proposes to development a Mega Food Park in 73 acres of land in its possession in Palakkad at an estimated project cost of Rs.130 cores. The project has already been submitted to Govt. of India for approval. The development work can be commenced on approval of Govt. of India. This would be the first Mega Food Park project in Kerala with Govt of India assistance of Rs.50 crores.



KINFRA Park in Ottapalam (under MIIU Scheme)

KINFRA proposes to develop an Industrial Park in Ottapalam in 82 acres of land in possession at a total project cost of Rs.75 crores under the

Industrial Infrastructure up gradation of Govt. of India. The project proposal is expected to be completed by mid 2015.

Plastic Park Mattanur

KINFRA proposes to develop a Plastic Park in Mattannur in 40 acres of land in possession at an estimated project cost of Rs.107.92 crores. The means of finance of the project would be Rs.40 crores as grant from Govt. of India. The project proposal has already been submitted to GoI and the construction activities in the proposed area is slated to commence



Startup Village

build. break. innovate



from October 2014.

Smart City / Infopark – Infrastructure development

KINFRA is the Nodal agency for developing basic infrastructure viz., water and approach roads for Smart City and Infopark at Kakkanad. The project cost for the 30 MLD water supply project is Rs.42.00 crores and for the road development is Rs.15.00 crores. These development works are expected to be completed within two years.

New Projects

Industrial Development Zones

KINFRA proposes to develop Industrial Development zones (IDZ) around the major Airport / Seaport to attract investment to the State. These IDZ are being identified in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikkode. Approximately 3000 acres of land has been identified. In the next two years KINFRA proposes to acquire 500 acres at a total estimated cost of Rs.575 crores.

Other Initiatives

Launch Built – to –Suit Space for MSMEs

KINFRA proposes to build Standard Design Factories for the promotion of Medium and Small Enterprises in Mazhuvannur(1,50000 Sq. ft), Ottapalam (1,25000 Sq. ft), Thallassery (60000 Sq. ft), Punalur

(60000 Sq. ft), Nadukani (1,20,000 Sq.ft), Rajakumari (60,000 Sq.ft), Palakkad (1,25,000 Sq.ft),

In all, KINFRA proposes to build approximately 7.00 lakhs sq.ft area at a total project cost of Rs.140crores. The expected investment from the above is around Rs.350 crores and approximately 700 units are expected in these built up spaces.

Special initiatives

Technology innovation Zone @ Hi Tech Park

A Technology Innovation centre is being set up in KINFRA Hi-Tech Park with an area of 1,25,000 sq.ft with an estimate project cost of Rs.32 crores. Around 250 enterprises are expected to grow up in this innovation zone with an investment of over Rs.75 crores.

The writer is Sr. Media Advisor, KINFRA



100 Farmers; Success Stories

In the present set up of Kerala, selecting hundred successful farmers, that too, from different parts of the state, is not an easy task for obvious reasons. We have a misconception that farmers' affinity towards agriculture is dwindling day by day and only a negligible few are depending solely on agriculture for their livelihood. Relevance of this book '100 FARMERS; 100 SUCCESS STORIES' is to be assessed in this backdrop.

The author of this book Dr.D. Shine Kumar, a public relations officer in Animal Husbandry Department succeeds in disproving and rewriting our age-old myth that a true farmer is always one with a "palathoppi" (country cap), "tharamundu" (traditional single cloth) and his body covered with mud and dirt. He introduces the success

stories and real life achievements of one hundred farmers from different fields of activities to substantiate his case. Those farmers are self assertive and confident in declaring that agriculture is more a pride and prestige to them, than a mere source of income and livelihood.

Each of the 318 pages of this book will enthrall not only the readers, who consider agriculture seriously, but those who love agriculture and also those who are eager to know more about different areas of farming. The individual success stories narrated in this book covering all cross sections of agriculture are amazingly varied and surprisingly interesting ones. The author begins the preface with the following universally accepted truth- Goodness and love always emerges from the soil. Every day flowers, grains

and young ones of all species emanate from the nature afresh. They in turn become the food, fodder and abode for tens of thousands of others. We humans are spellbound spectators of this never ending, astonishing horizon of nature. These thought provoking and poetic opening lines will conquer the minds of the reader from the outset.

In the area of agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, these hundred farmers are becoming exemplary models with their unique inventions and unparalleled disclosures. The methods and techniques adopted by them, either with or without scientific backing, culminating in reaping unexpected success. The book is designed with separate section for each branch to enable ease of reference. The traditional farming methods to grow "Bheeman Kachil" (yam), Quintal Kappa



(tapioca), “ Kappa Vazha” (plantain) bunches touching the soil, trees falling down due to over burden of papaya etc are covered separately. The success stories of those who succeed in fish farming in water pools of ‘silpauline’ sheets and large water pools are covered in separate chapters.

The case studies of dairy farmers who could successfully blend the traditional methods of cattle rearing with modern scientific dairying methods for greater results are also discussed. The experiences of those who could mint money from commercial crops like pepper, coffee and cardamom are inspiring. The success stories of farmers with firm determination and hard work who could reap exceedingly good yield from bitter guard (Paval), Koval, spinach (Cheera), yams (“Chena”), melon and cucumber are greatly interesting. The facts about farmers doubling their income by mixed farming methods and crop rotations are indeed surprising. The incidents were farmers without succumbing to fate, challenge their destiny by toiling in the soil and reaping success in lives are as touching as fictions. The book devotes enough pages to explain the techniques of maintaining both country mango gardens and Malaysian fruit orchards. The methods to be followed for growing different types of vegetables, flowering plants, horticulture are clearly illustrated in this book.

The activities requiring technical knowhow like Neera and Coconut oil production, Floriculture in ‘polyhouses’,



making natural fertilizers etc are explained in detail. The information required for the cultivation of Pineapple, Cucumber, Chinese yam, carrot, garlic, Onion, Strawberry etc given elaborately. Apart from introducing the reader the patterns and modality of growing various crops, the scientific way of poultry farming for producing more eggs, growing broiler chicken and ducks, growing pets and breeding of dogs are explained from commercial angle for all types of readers. The importance of new generation farming like “gift tilapia”, rearing varieties of pigeons, white quails, locally bred cows, “sumo tapioca”, “Kanjikuzhi” pea, “Anakomban” lady’s finger and their cultivation techniques are also dealt with in this book.

The wonder created by a group of

youngsters of Vyangarachira in Alapuzha district by fish farming in a marshy waste land, the story of papaya farm of Arun Kumar, a Kasargode native, who left a lucrative job in advertisement field to take up agriculture, are narrated interestingly. The success story of the vegetable farm of Mohandas, who resigned from Police service to pursue agriculture, success of the dairy farm of Sibi who sought the help of machines to grow fodder grass are also inspiring. The venture of Benny of Kumili who made huts for tourists even on tree tops is a new revelation to the reader.

The interesting story of Dhanush, a little farmer and that of Subier, a devoted farmer from Calicut who defeated Cancer, touch the readers so intimately. The small scale agricultural schemes which have been carried out in premises of Veterinary University are also discussed by the author. The Aiswarya poultry project meant for high yielding variety hens of Athulya breed and the Anaswara project for Quails are also explained for the benefit of new entrepreneurs. This book ‘100 Karshakar, 100 Vijayangal’, an informative and reference guide both for farmers and also for those who love agriculture is priced at RS.180. This book, in short, guarantees an essential reading experience to all those who are related to agriculture in one way or the other. The success stories of the selected 100 farmers who devoted their souls and bodies to the soil for these causes, is published by Malayala Manorama Publication Division. ■





Pothos The Stress Reducer

Healthy happy employees are the basic factors in an efficient office atmosphere. Such people can increase productivity as well as discharge their duties more meaningfully and sincerely. Fortunately nature has created certain plants which enhance the overall atmosphere in an office by way of reducing stress, eliminating air pollutants and also providing a clean, tidy and healthy atmosphere. This in turn increases the working level of employees in any office atmosphere. Such plants are described

as cool office plants or desk plants which can be chosen according to the available space and specific needs. They can also be called Indoor office plants as in the case of Indoor house plants. Pothos is one among the good plants used to place in an office atmosphere. Remember that Pothos is both an office plant as well as a house plant. One of the main advantages of Pothos is that in can easily purify indoor air and it is rated as one of the best houseplants to remove all indoor air pollutants like formaldehyde, xylene and benzene. In addition to remove

contaminants from the atmosphere the plant provides supplemental oxygen which is essential for a healthy life. Yet another reason for the popularity of Pothos is that it can tolerate lower sunlight, lower humidity and cooler temperatures.

Pothos are the easiest houseplants to grow. It is a long growing, evergreen leafy vine which can grow up to 20 metre in ideal tropical conditions throwing aerial roots which adhere to surfaces. But in containers it confines its growth to two metre when given suitable support. This actually depends

on the variety and how it is grown and also how much it is pruned. The leaves are alternate, small, variegated and heart shaped in juvenile plants but thick stemmed and broad leafed in mature plants. Pothos is generally known by a series of common names like Golden Pothos, Pothos, Devils Ivy, Money plant etc. When grown indoors Pothos prefers to stay in the juvenile phase. The opposite leaves are usually round 8 to 10 cm long and 30 cm in width. They are more or less heart shaped, ending in a pointed tip, and glossy bright green with white, cream or yellow markings. The stems are slender and the leaves have long petioles. Even if a native of Solomon Islands in the South-West Pacific Pothos has now established as a house plant in almost all the tropical climate areas. Another peculiarity of Pothos is that it is a best indoor plant for low-light situations including bright indirect light. It can be grown at home in a hanging basket, climbing in a plant pole or spilling over the edge of a table or shelf thus creating an easy way to add some green to our house. Pothos can be grown in dry soil or vases of water. It thrives both in nutrient rich as well as nutrient poor soil.

Regarding soil type Pothos prefers any well drain potting mix. They prefer to have their medium dry out completely between watering. Avoid over watering. When growing a plant like Pothos take advantage of the plants eagerness to climb on a surface. Train it to grow across a wall by attaching the vine to small hooks or inconspicuous nails.

Pothos propagation begins with the root nodes on the stem right below the leaf or branch junctures. These tiny bumps on the stems of rooting pothos are the key to propagate the plant. When the plant grows well or it looks leggy or too long simply cut off 4 to 6 inch length of healthy stem for cuttings. Remove the leaf that is closest to the cut end. Dip the cut end in any rooting hormone. Set the cuttings in a potting mixture of sand, soil and leaf manure or dried cow dung. Keep the soil moist and keep the rooting Pothos away from direct sunlight. Roots develop after one

month and after two or three months the new plants will be ready. Stems can also root when they touch soil. Pothos can also be grown in water. Take a vase, jar, bottle or similar glass container. Clear containers are nice since we can find the growth of algae inside it. If you don't want to clean the containers frequently choose a darker glass vase or glass jar that will block some light and slow the growth of algae. Pour clear tap water inside the jar. Tap water which is not chlorinated will do. If you feel it is chlorinated let the water sit in an open container for about a day before pouring it in the jar with a new plant or an existing plant. This gives

the plant will be growing in dense and lush in the container.

When growing in pots repot the plant when the roots have probably filled the pot. Repot with fresh soil. Even if the plant is mostly pest and disease free there are certain manifestations which are symbolic showing the condition of plant. Identify these symptoms while managing the plant. Black spots on the leaves and the sudden collapse of the plant indicate the medium has been too wet. Dry brown edges mean the plant has been kept dry too long. Loss of variegation of leaves indicates that the plant needs some more light. Sudden pailing of



time for the chlorine, which can be harmful to plants, to dissipate from the tap water. Now add a pinch of any fertiliser to the water before planting Pothos. Any kind of liquid fertiliser will also do. Take a cutting from the end of a vine with at least three nodes. Remove a leaf or two from the end of the cutting, but not on the end where new growth is occurring. Place cuttings in the container and make sure that the cut ends are covered with water. After a few days we can see roots forming from the cuttings. Take care to change the water in the container periodically and rinse out the glass vase or jar in which the plant is growing. This will prevent the water from becoming stagnant and foul. If there is any algae build up clean the sides of the container. As the plants grow they may begin to grow rather long. Simply cut the tips of the plants and root them in water. Soon

leaves means the plant is getting too much sun. The plant rarely flowers. When mature plant flowers the flowers are tiny and white on erect spadix surrounded by green spathe. There are certain popular varieties in Pothos. Marble Queen - a white variegated variety that grows very slowly with cream coloured leaves and flecks of green and gray-green; Golden - variety with leaves and stems in yellow colour; Tricolour - variety has green leaves mottled with yellow and cream.

Pothos is a good house plant and also it can be grown in public places like offices, hospitals, auditoriums and malls. Since it needs diffused light it is also apt for kitchens or even bathrooms. A pothos plant if grown in a clean glass jar and kept in the window sill behind the kitchen sink it seems very lively. It also helps in removing air pollutants in the atmosphere. ■



GOVERNMENT ORDERS

1. GO (M S) No. 147 / 2014 / Agri. dated Thiruvananthapuram , 25-06-2014

The monthly pension for the small scale farmers has been hiked to Rs. 600. Earlier it was Rs. 500 and the hike will be with effect from 1st April, 2014.

2. G O (M S) No. 74 / 2014 / Labour dated Thiruvananthapuram, 27-06-2014

The retirement age of allopathy doctors in the insurance medical services department has been enhanced to 60 years to overcome the crisis due to the shortage of doctors. As per the order acute shortage of doctors may affect the smooth functioning of the ESI hospitals and dispensaries in the state causing much inconvenience for the ESI beneficiaries and hence this order.

3. GO (M S) No. 52 / 2014 / SJD dated Thiruvananthapuram , 20-06-2014

The norms for applying for the social security pension scheme has been redefined vide this order. The income limit for various pensions like Indira Gandhi national old age pension, pension for widows, physically handicapped persons etc. are unified to one lakh. Applicants availing other pensionary benefits are also eligible for the above mentioned social security pensions, if they are within the one lakh income limit. The order will have effect from 1st April 2014.

4. GO (M S) No. 49 / 2014 / Transport dated Thiruvananthapuram , 25-06-2014

Sanction has been accorded by the state government for the extension of the metroline of the Kochi metro rail project, for a distance of 2 km from Pettah to S.N. Junction, Thripunithura as Phase IA of the project. The estimated cost of this extension is Rs. 323 crore. KMRL will take further action to go forward with the project after obtaining due approvals from the Central Government.

5. GO (Rt) No. 831 / 2014 / Labour dated Thiruvananthapuram , 21-06-2014

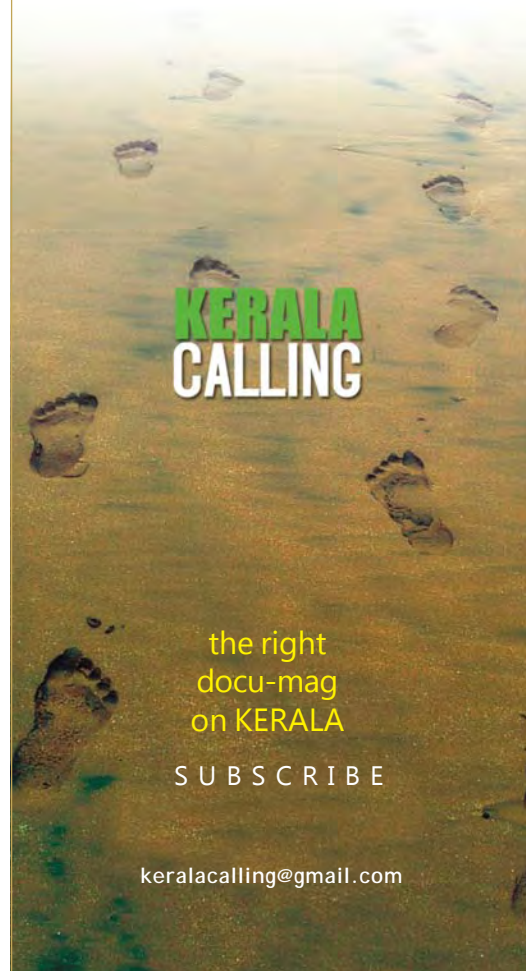
As per this order those who have lost their seniority during the period between 1-01-1993 and 21-06-2014 due to non -renewal of the registration in the employment exchanges can renew their registration up to 31-08-2014. The order has also clarified that yet another chance for registration will not be given and those who avail this chance will get their original seniority reinstated.

6. GO (Rt) No. 107 / 2014 / S&YA dated Thiruvananthapuram , 18-06-2014

The Sports and Youth welfare department has issued guidelines for reinstalling the prefab houses in the sports village of National games. Earlier government has accorded sanction for building the games village using PUF based prefabricated technology. According to the guidelines prefab structures shall be reused for setting up of sports related facilities like sports hostels, stadium change rooms, toilets and equipment storage spaces, and other sports related needs of govt. departments and LSG institutions, setting up of sports promoting institutions etc.

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