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# KERALA CALLING

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2020 December 01



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# **DO NOT NEGLECT THEM!**

**When we assemble to battle the COVID-19 virus, we must remember the vulnerable amongst us. The needs of the elderly population should not be neglected when we raise our defences against the pandemic. All of us have the responsibility to support them as they are placed in reverse-quarantine.**

**Well-lit rooms with good ventilation should be selected for those entering reverse-quarantine.**

- Necessary medicines should be stockpiled.
- Magazines and newspapers should be provided for recreational purposes.
- They should be provided with a healthy, balanced diet.
- The elderly should be assisted in availing of telemedicine and Sanjeevani services for continuing any treatment they are undergoing.
- Family members should also try to do daily exercises with them.
- If possible, make sure they have access to a TV, mobile phone, laptop and other devices for communication.
- Anyone with a cough, cold, fever and those who are at risk of infection should NOT come in contact with those undergoing reverse-quarantine.
- It is very important to provide the elderly with love, care and unconditional support as they go through this period.

**Don't forget to follow**



**Social distancing, Mask, Soap!**

# Let us ring in a new normal

As the death knell of the year 2020 is already in the air, the scary wounds it has inflicted upon the universal mind, are yet to heal. The pandemic is still here and we are reconciling ourselves with the reality in a New Normal ambience.

So are we, the Keralites. Despite being a tiny State, Kerala has always showcased its mettle in times of disastrous moments. We shouldered together during the worst floods that ripped apart our State. But the floods failed to submerge our unity. Subsequently, followed the Ockhi Cyclone and landslides. The pandemic Covid 19 has dug its claws on our vibrant lives for the last eight months. Again the unfailing Malayali resolve resurfaced with the aid of a focused Government at the helm of affairs. Doubtlessly, we have been able to tame the pandemic to a great extent.

We must acknowledge the fact that the threat is still lurking in the air. The scientific fraternity is on the brim of introducing vaccines to eradicate the virus. But till then, we must be cautious.

Now it is time to live up with the present scenario. The dawn of hope is in the short run. Slowly, but steadily the world is limping back to possible normalcy and we are no exception.

When the world is returning to what it was earlier but with caution, many lives of eminence have departed the world, some succumbed to the pandemic. Those maestros owe remembrance and the following pages definitely spare a much more deserving space for all those great ones, from different walks of life.

Looking around, we could witness the re-emergence of art-lovers seeking new experiments and bibliophiles searching for novel trends in world literature. Keeping this fact in consideration, a good number of pages of this issue are dedicated to art, literature and culture. The charm and festive mood of Christmas in a new world order also adore the issue. I am confident enough to expect that all our readers enjoy quality reading once again, as you always do.

I wish all our readers a Happy New Year in advance

**S. Harikishore IAS**

Editor-in-Chief



*Merry Christmas*

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Sneha Salim

# All roads lead to a new world order

What was imposed in the whole world by the virus – Covid 19, is nothing but a sea-change in the lives of millions, maybe humanity in its entirety. But like always life is coping up with the new tomorrow.



Last December, exactly a year ago, the world population entered a strange phase, which was to be dominated by a new virus, all set to bring both the global and local movements to a standstill. In a sense of emergency, people and states drew up action plans and implemented precautionary measures. Consequentially, these measures changed the game for all the players, and laid the foundation for a new world order.

The Covid-19 pandemic mitigation measures like lockdown and social distancing has profoundly altered the very nature of human interactions. People have disciplined themselves in public spaces and crowds have turned undesirable. Kisses, hugs end even affectionate handshakes have unexpectedly become forbidden. There is also a new level of awareness of personal health and hygiene, with a special attention

on immunity building. This awareness has managed to cross class barriers, and has provided a basic health education to all sections of all communities.

This increased attention was not restricted to physical health, but also embraced mental health issues. In Kerala, telephone helplines were opened up to accommodate and ease the severe psychological outcomes of this pandemic and the lockdown. In this new world with masks on, the budgets of nations were destined to have a bigger allocation for the health sector.

## The Covid-19 pandemic mitigation measures like lockdown and social distancing has profoundly altered the very nature of human interactions.

Meanwhile, at homes, hobbies and creative activities surged. People paid greater care for their living spaces and took up gardening, painting, re-decorating and so on to make it more lively and fulfilling. Even if life might fall back into the fast track again, these acts of joy are likely to survive and stay fresh.

The pre-Covid norm of a 'big fat wedding' now stands challenged. Instead, the trend of small private celebrations was established, and in future, many in the Malayali society, may stick to this format, primarily as it is economical.

The past year also witnessed an incredibly increasing demand for internet connectivity and accessibility to technology. Work from home and online learning is now the new norm, and is likely to take new forms. The future will have to seriously look into the questions of digital divide, especially in third world countries like India.

## In this era of the novel Corona virus, people have stepped out of their comfort zones and conventions

Work from home has a long-term indirect benefit as it is likely to shoot up rural income. Service sector employees, previously working and living in cities, are now working from their homes, and spending their incomes in their hometowns.



Schools and colleges have already turned to online platforms for teaching and sharing notes, but the experience of regular schooling is not something easy to forget or replace, nor is such a replacement a healthy option. Yet, it is expected that multimedia will be turned into a necessary component in learning. Moreover, in the arena of distant higher education and open school learning, the expected development in connectivity will open up a range of possibilities.

It is not a happy thought how public transport has been demonized as carriers of disease, and how private vehicles are now increasingly being opted for commutation. This may help the automobile industry that had crashed even before the pandemic get back to business, though affordability could still be a hindrance. But, the world might vehemently opt for clean and green energy, to safeguard health of individuals and environment at the same time.

The State's power has increased, but so have its responsibilities. People across nations demand welfare schemes and health services from Governments. The greatest challenge staring at the countries is human development, which is critically essential to put up a good fight against similar pandemics to come.

### Stepping out from the comfort zones

In this era of the novel Corona virus, people have stepped out of their comfort zones and conventions. Youngsters who lost their jobs stepped out to sell fish, mothers sold saplings and children bred guppies and fathers helped in the kitchen. India and nations worldwide are looking at producing essential goods and services locally, in preparation of further market disruptions in future. People of Kerala have in the recent years confronted the devastating floods and outbreaks like that of Nipah virus, and have proven their resilience in these crises. The community have risen to each emergency, and restricted it from turning into big tragedies.

As the news of a vaccine lights up the months to come, one could hopefully say that the humankind has crossed yet another hurdle. The Covid-19 pandemic is nothing small, but it cannot be bigger than people's strife to survive, together. ■



Kavita Martin  
Freelance Journalist

# We are again singing the Lord's Song in 'foreign' lands

*"What's true of all the evils in the world is true of plague as well. It helps men to rise above themselves."* - Albert Camus, The Plague

The past nine months of 2020 have been a great challenge to the world as the pandemic COVID-19 ripped apart humanity, socially and economically. The Developing countries as well as the most developed ones struggled hard to survive and fight against the "virus" and grapple with the aftermath of economic crumbling.



Humanity, over the centuries, have undergone many stressful periods in terms of war, natural calamities and pandemics. But the modern century's unexpected pandemic, SARS Cov-2 or coronavirus 2019 has not just brought a plethora of long-lasting health issues, but also psychological, economic and social damages as well.

While senior citizens with existing and multiple health issues faced further complications following the infection, new research findings have laid out the possible after effects of COVID 19 on the young. Psychological trauma that individuals underwent was no less, many drove themselves to suicide or into mental stress that required medical attention.





Many lost livelihoods and their sole income source. Social distancing, a mandatory norm for preventing community spread, strengthened the fear and anxiety born out of isolation leading to chronic psychological illness despite the constant efforts by Governments and non-Governmental organisations, health and community workers.

For a larger population of Keralites working and living outside the country, this pandemic period was and is a testing time, many helplessly watched from distance as they lost their loved ones to the pandemic or losing their jobs with little avenue to sustain. The international aviation regulations and non-availability of sufficient medical facilities in countries where they work made life a tougher challenge, especially those working in the Middle East or students stuck in the European countries.

## Psychological trauma that individuals underwent was no less

Tresa (name changed) is working as an accountant in Salalah, Oman. Just before the pandemic spread, her husband lost his job and had returned to their native place in Kerala. She was forced to spend the last eight months alone in a flat and this was a testing time, undergoing stress and mental trauma. The fear that her husband and old parents would fall sick and she wouldn't be able to be at their side when they

For a larger population of Keralites working and living outside the country, this pandemic period was and is a testing time

required her the most drove her into panic attacks. She had to undergo treatment for it.

Tresa is not the only one who had to suffer such anxiety disorders. Many expatriate working women in the GCC countries who are staying away from family and were confined in their quarters as Work from Home system was implemented underwent similar plight.

## The international aviation regulations and non-availability of sufficient medical facilities in the countries where they work have made life a tougher challenge

For Nirmal, working in Dubai as a marketing executive it was a time of job - loss and no - salary, as his company shut down owing to business setbacks. He struggled for more than six months with stress and unemployment. For Lini J, a grandmother who visited Dubai to see her grandchildren on a visit visa, the pandemic period was a struggle as she had her husband alone back home during the COVID period.

For the Keralites in the Middle East, it was a bolt out of the blue, with few flights available to return home. Many lost their lives in their countries of residence and their kin back home couldn't even have a last glimpse of their loved ones, as bodies could not be repatriated due to COVID protocols. Despite all challenges, the Governments of host countries rose to the occasion and brought succour to the expatriate community.

Back home, the Governments have brought out various measures to make the situation better for those who returned home from abroad losing their sole income or suffered the aftermath of COVID infection. The Governmental intervention with GCC nation Governments also supported their cause. ■



Ajith Lawrence  
Freelance Journalist

# Sustainable Urbanisation and Construction

The population has crossed the 7 billion mark and there are more homeless than ever. And all the more people are littering and polluting, damaging the environment at rates that have never been seen before.



If sustainable housing becomes the building method most common in tomorrow's world, the future will indeed be a brighter place for generations to come. The modern world generally doesn't accept the idea and philosophy of low-cost sustainable housing, where

sustainable construction materials are made using. Sustainable housing provides a way to immensely lessen the negative impact our development has on the environment, and can also be beneficial to it.

A cement plastered building breaths Oxygen for 99



years and emit heat and carbon dioxide- experts opine. The method of sustainable and eco-friendly housing is inevitable for maintaining the eco-system and diminish the carbon emission.

With the rapid and ruthless increase in concrete structures, natural and man-made disasters are frequenting. But sustainable - Housing Architects keep in touch with the trends in the market. Compressed earth blocks are a new material to use, as it addresses a lot of problems that the conventional earth masonry faces. Eco-friendly houses are always economical also.

## The modern world generally doesn't accept the idea and philosophy of low-cost sustainable housing

There are a lot of ways in which a home can be sustainable. You can convert a non-sustainable house to a sustainable one by installing solar panels, solar water heaters, rainwater harvesting systems, a wind generator and by insulating your roof and walls and by multi-glaze shading your windows. A sustainable house can use different materials that can be considered sustainable materials - for example

With the rapid and ruthless increase in concrete structures, natural and man-made disasters are frequenting

## Polypropylene bags have superior strength and durability

rapidly renewable plant materials like bamboo and straw, recycled stone and metal.

Earthbag building fills a unique niche in the quest for sustainable architecture. The bags can be filled with local, natural materials which are non-compostable (even when damp), attractive to vermin, or burnable... in other words, it is extremely durable. The fill material is generally non-toxic also. Earthbags have the tremendous advantage of providing thermal insulation. When filled with soil they provide thermal mass, but when filled with lighter weight materials, such as crushed volcanic stone, perlite, vermiculite, or rice hulls, they provide insulation.

The earthbags can be stacked in a wide variety of shapes, including domes, they have the potential to virtually eliminate the need for common tensile materials in the structure, especially the wood and steel often used for roofs. Another aspect of sustainability is found in the 'economy' of this method. Polypropylene bags have superior strength and durability, as long as they are kept away from too much sunlight. For permanent housing, the bags should be covered with some kind of plaster for protection.

The ease and the simplicity of building with earthbags should also be mentioned since there is much unskilled labour available around the world that can be tapped for using this technology. One person familiar with the basics of earthbag building can easily train others to assist in the erection of a building. ■



# The 'bangle-d' covid era



Nazeem Beegum  
Freelance Journalist

Whatever means it took to blame it on the pandemic, women counterparts across nations have found it a blessing in disguise as they venture out to conquer the otherwise restricted world with aplomb.



Women are 'multitasking wonders' beyond geographical boundaries. However, in Kerala, a state that boasts 92.07% female literacy, women are less self-reliant compared to their counterparts in other parts of India, and from across the world.

According to a United Nations' study, the pandemic could dilute decades of advancement on gender equality. In Kerala, which has a sex ratio of 1084 females per 1,000 males, and where women have

made their presence felt in all walks of life, they were reluctant to explore themselves. Now, they have started investing in themselves like never before to acquire new skills and set up their businesses.

The business of growing plants, and setting up small-scale nurseries are mushrooming, especially, in rural areas. Mini Jayakumar is one such homemaker who successfully transformed her hobby of gardening to open a nursery at home in October. She said, "People



are so crazy to buy plants, especially indoor plants. I have customers every day. I have even stopped going out not to lose business. Such is the situation. In a way, it helps women a lot not to kill time but it brings down their stress level, which is an outcome of spending too much time within the four walls of their houses.”

According to a United Nations’ study, the pandemic could dilute decades of advancement on gender equality.

A woman, who spent most of her life outside India, on condition of anonymity said, “I always wished to have a driving licence in India. And it became a necessity when I relocated to India and started living alone. So, the first thing I did after completing my quarantine was to join for a driving licence.”

Others have ventured into home-made confectionery. The advantage is food waste is avoided. Some have even ventured into the family business.



Jayasree, a pensioner and former employee of Kerala Housing Board Development Corporation, shared a different view. “I have to depend on my children because I restricted myself from going out when Covid struck the world. I miss going out and doing things by myself. However, Covid has made my days busier than ever. Earlier I was worried about my post-retirement days thinking about how would I spend my spare time. But, after the arrival of the pandemic, I am not getting free time. I am doing so many things which lacked my attention when I was a working woman. Now I enjoy spending my time in the garden and doing other household chores. I don’t find it tiring, and I can say my house is in better shape now. Nothing is out of place,” she said.

Tennyson Antony Morris, a video producer, refuses to accept that the lives of women have changed drastically in Kerala. “Acquiring new skills has nothing to do with Covid. But, of course, they have spare



time and are investing that into chasing their dreams or aspirations. This you should observe on a wider perspective of women becoming independent and less reliant on others, and not as an outcome of Covid.”

Interestingly, a vast majority of men are supporting their women after finding them enterprising and determined to run a business. However, international studies say working women are doing more childcare across all wage brackets. According to a report published on BBC, researchers from Boston Consulting Group has found that working women currently spend an average of 15 hours a week more on unpaid domestic labour than men in the US and Europe. A survey by the University of Melbourne, Australia, suggests that parents are putting in an extra six hours a day of care and supervision, compared to Indian women who blindly devote their time for child care and home-schooling of their kids. ■



S. Adikesavan  
Bank Executive -Public sector

# As 'bankable' as always

While the Covid pandemic had led to a sharp focus on the services of doctors and paramedical staff and others across the country, there was another segment of the workforce which had silently but substantially contributed to life going on unaffected — the people working in the banking system.



The lives of those affected by the virus had to be supported by umpteen numbers of officials from various departments of both the State and the Center. But equally important it has been to ensure that cash flows and money supply are maintained uninterrupted as well.

Cash is imperative in all dealings and unless this essential commodity for transactions is made available, anyone would have found the going tough. It is a sign

of the evolution of the Indian banking system over the past several decades including our advancement in digital technology and the "Service-before-Self" attitude of the bank staff at branches that led to this "essential service" being rendered round the clock during the lockdown and even thereafter.

In Kerala, the districts of Waynad and Idukki have far-flung branches where the staff have toiled under trying circumstances to enable continued banking



services. The Banking Correspondents/ Bank Mitras in remote areas also have to be commended for their role in reaching banking services even during these difficult times.

Says Sri. K.S. Krishna, a nationally-respected bank trade union leader: “If there is one section of Employees who had to defy the call of ‘stay home, stay safe’, it was Bank Employees. Country’s Banks were not locked down but kept opened as essential services. Despite the fear and uncertainty caused by the unprecedented pandemic, Bank Employees enabled the functioning of the Banks because it was People’s money that was kept in the Banks and it was People’s right to access the same in the time of ‘need’. The One-lac plus network of the Banks and ten lakhs plus workforce rose to the occasion”.

Bank staff even went to extend of pooled resources, material and financial, to support the poor and vulnerable sections of the society who were stranded and caught unaware by the lockdown and the spreading pandemic.

The cash flows from both the Centre and the State Governments through the Banks to the vulnerable sections of society, particularly in rural India, have

**Country’s Banks were not locked down but kept opened as essential services**

seemingly started yielding results. Latest economic data point to an incipient recovery though the optimism has to be tempered with caution.

## The second half will turn out to be much better for the Indian economy and our State

Our State’s Subhiksha Keralam is also receiving a positive response from the ground and it is reported that youth and returning NRKs are taking to homestead cultivation in a big way. ICRA has stated that the recovery in GST collections in September and sales of petrol and diesel “provides a meaningful signal of a broader economic revival”.

## Latest economic data point to an incipient recovery

The Union and State government machinery and banks are acting in concert are coming to the aid of the common people during this unprecedented crisis. It is this the attitude of the Governments and banks which have been responsive to industry demands, constantly in dialogue and sensitive to feedback from the ground that gives hope that the second half will turn out to be much better for the Indian economy and our State, than the first, in an otherwise very difficult year for the world as a whole. ■



# Learning in the Virtual World



Kavitha L.

*Assistant Professor of Commerce and Member, PG Board of Studies at The University of Kerala.*

Can a student learn in a virtual classroom as effectively as in an actual classroom situation? The answer is surprising- 'yes.'



Online teaching that we experience now is in its crudest form and can be equated to the cinema of a century ago. We are still in the 'silent-era' and in the place of Metro, Goldwyn and Mayer, three prominent studios of the 20s we have Zoom, G-meet and Webex. Virtual teaching will enhance with technological improvement, and like cinema, it is going to move from the silent era to talkies; from B & W to

Colour and advance to be what cinema is today. Two years from now we can imagine a virtual classroom which will be the same as an actual classroom. Students will be transported from the conveniences of their house to a virtual world of knowledge, a platform that will be so cutting-edge that learning will be a virtual tour guided by algorithms.





Mahatma Gandhi asserted that education aimed at the all-round development of the individual, its aim is to nurture an individual to face the challenges of life. Sitting in an online classroom surrounded by virtual reality, the prospect of a student facing life-situations are rare. All his experience will be virtual that when he steps out of it into the real world, his capacities may drain out and he will be like an android drained out of battery.

### Three prominent studios of the 20s we have Zoom, G-meet and Webex

But the world has to change, and capitalism demands change. More than content, we are going to witness progress in the mode of teaching. The twenty-first century is going to be an era of knowledge dissemination and it is going to go out in search of learners rather than learners seeking knowledge. Kerala has a tremendous growth opportunity in this area. We have to equip our curricula to meet international demands.

When online learning was first launched, we all believed that it could never be as good as face-to-face learning. But now, after six months of teaching online, we understand that it is as good as a real classroom. It is a fact that a student in a virtual classroom learns as much as a student in a real classroom.

The components, teacher, learner, platform and subject matter, for both virtual and real classrooms are the same. Yet, the virtual classroom has to encounter various issues. Network connectivity is a major hazard.

## Kerala, a state of intellectuals and educationists, can easily become an educational hub for global learners

Initiatives to enhance the potential of connectivity now seem more than a need. Interaction and communication are the two most crucial elements to make a classroom effective.

The instructor should take steps to coordinate the virtual environment to upsurge the interaction between learners. Students can be made to work collaboratively through live debates, peer reviews, interactive discussion boards, video conferencing, etc.

The delivery medium has transformed from direct face-to-face interaction to online mode, and this has not resulted in any difference in learning outcomes. The quality of instruction has been enhanced by the possibility of technology. Students' attention has increased and students can view the video lectures several times till they understand the text. The future of teaching-learning will be not like the earlier years, but it will be a hybrid platform where the whole process will be dominated by web platforms.

Only students who are independent and self-motivated can succeed in maintaining motivation in an online course. A new avenue has been opened and the possibilities it offers has to be capitalized on. Kerala, a state of intellectuals and educationists, can easily become an educational hub for global learners. We have to exploit this possibility and work towards attaining this goal. The opportunity of expanding globally should be considered seriously and steps are taken to accomplish this. ■

## The delivery medium has transformed from direct face-to-face interaction to online mode



K. Jayakumar

*New Media Strategist and Data Analytics Expert  
Deputy Commander (Honorary),  
Kerala Police Cyber Dome*

# Modern Technology and the Internet

The internet is now a core element of modern political and election campaigns. So, it becomes imperative to comprehend the potential of the internet as well as the social media 'openings'.



Communication means such as social media, news portals, and social media with blogging, vlogging podcasting; these Internet technologies are used for cause-related fundraising, lobbying, volunteering, community the building, and organizing various activities in the society. With the help of effective web promotion services, promotional activities can become more appealing in the web space.

Nowadays the Internet is being used as the main medium of staging promotional activities in business, politics, social problems and education. Since the internet can be accessed anywhere and everywhere even in mobile phones, it has helped in reaching the public 35 times better than the conventional medium. 'Collaborative tagging' is a new and innovative logic



**‘Collaborative tagging’ is a new and innovative logic through which everyone can spread ‘news’**

through which everyone can spread ‘news’ among multiple people via various social networking mediums and once the news is reached, it is possible to make the users glued to those posts/news by frequently updating the news/posts through - ‘feeds’. This method of feeding is the ‘link bait’. Through such posts, users get an opportunity to post comments or air their views (both positive and negative) which would in turn help in popularizing. Once a user puts his/her comment/opinion on a particular topic, he would be further notified whenever another

magnitude of popularization. All the above-mentioned tactics set the foundation for collaborative tagging.

Both in politics and business, it’s a trend to utilize the negative and positive posts as a weapon for promotion. Both the number of negative and positive posts increase the popularity, i.e when somebody posts something negative on a post, a person who supports the post would put up comments

information hence the content must upload in the world, the wide web is the right information. Unwanted news is widely spread across the World Wide Web hence it is a must to nurture only

**Both in politics and business, it’s a trend to utilize the negative and positive posts as a weapon for promotion**

## Nowadays the Internet is being used as the main medium of staging promotional activities

person comment on the same post and this method are known as ‘link juice’. ‘Link Condom’ gives the quantity of link juice or

favouring the post; in such manner, the comments increase and involvement of more users in reacting take place eventually increasing the recognition of the post.

When a user is searching for a particular detail online, its necessary that the data that has been listed corresponding to the particular Search is the right

the right information during the generic search. Utilizing the advantages of collaborative tagging, one should bring up positive reviews over the negative reviews on posts to increase healthy publicity. Political and Industrial world has always borne the fruits of online promotion. Today’s youth judge between right and wrong through the web. Hence responsible people must remove the wrong information from the web and promote only right and healthy information systematically. ■

# To Love and be loved...



Dr. B. Ajith Babu  
Assistant Director,  
Animal Husbandry Department, Kerala

Pets are often considered as the near-perfect companions, especially in the time of distress. Judicious selection and nurturing makes pet-rearing simple and a stress-relieving work out.



COVID 19 can be considered as one of the leading psychological experiments ever as more than 400 crores of people which accounts to half of the world's population is under lockdown in various continents. Experts opine that people who are quarantined are very likely to develop a wide range

of symptoms of psychological stress and disorders. Spending time with a pet can help a lot in recovering from the depression caused by isolation. Surely it can be the reason for the current upsurge in the pet keeping 'hobby'.

## What pets do for their owners...

- **Never let you deserted**

Pets, especially cats and dogs make great companions. They'll be joyful to listen to your goings-on and sufferings.

- **Keep you healthy**

Most of the people have the tendency to get a bit lazy. Here the pets will come handy since they 'drag' owners out and make them run around the park; the pet could be the finest personal trainer for you.

- **Lower your stress levels and can improve your immune system**

Pets can become a relaxing - medicine. It is observed that pet owners are likely to have controlled blood pressure, cholesterol and heart problems than others who don't have it. Moreover, it is seen that babies who live with a dog tend to experience fewer infections and are generally healthier.

- **Companionship to children with learning problems**

Children with learning difficulties, autism and similar disorders habitually find it difficult chatting to fellow students, but they have no problem at all with chatting away to friendly animals.

- **Make kids responsible**

Maintaining a pet will assuredly teach a kid or any individual to absorb the practical skills required to own a pet, nurturing and empathy skills, which are vital in later life.

Having a dog or cat or even a goose can make you feel a lot safer in your home. They will alarm you about the strangers, protect you from attacking - animals.

## Selection

- Select the most 'suitable' pet. Consult with all your family members, as the pet is going to be your family member.



- Give proper training at the right time for your pet to get rid of vices.
- Practice scientific feeding management for your pet for a healthy life.
- Give all the prophylactic vaccinations in time to prevent zoonotic diseases.
- Give adequate drugs to prevent all ecto - endoparasitic infestations.
- Animal welfare is the most important point

to be considered while maintaining a pet, because sometimes animal welfare laws seem to be more stringent than human welfare laws.

## One should select pets from the specified regulatory list.

1. Parrots – 350 species
2. Parakeets–small parrots
3. Doves- small pigeons
4. Canaries – beginners first bird
5. Finches– can be kept together
6. Pigeons– 344 species
7. Love birds– 20-30 years life span
8. Budgerigars– most popular pet
9. Dogs– more than 200 breeds
10. Cats– up to 100 cat breeds
11. Cows
12. Buffaloes
13. Camels
14. Sheep
15. Goats
16. Poultryies
17. Horses
18. Lambs
19. Ponies
20. Pigs
21. Ornamental Fishes- 800 species
22. Asses
23. Rabbits – 305 breeds
24. Albino mouse & Guinea pigs ■





Ignatius Pereira  
Senior Journalist

# Christmas in the spell of the pandemic

It is well known that Christmas is the annual Christian festival celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ on December 25. The word Christmas is a shortened form of "Christ's mass". The first known date of Christmas being celebrated on December 25th was in 336 AD during the rule of Constantine, the first Christian Roman Emperor. Afterwards, Pope Julius I (337 to 352) formally announced that the birth of Jesus Christ would be celebrated on the 25th December. But in view of the COVID-19 pandemic situation how will Christmas 2020 be celebrated? That is a global question in the air since November.



Christmas is now celebrated by Christians and also many others who are not Christians. Christians celebrate Christmas by attending special church services, spending time with family members, wearing new clothes and having a festive meal.

The Christmas star is one of the most prominent symbols of Christmas celebrations. Christmas crib, Christmas trees and Santa Claus or Christmas Father are also equally prominent symbols of Christmas.

The Christmas crib represents the scene of nativity

and that tradition is more than eight hundred years old. The first Christmas crib was designed and created by Saint Francis of Assisi in the year 1223. The Christmas star is symbolic of the celestial phenomenon that is mentioned in the Gospel which led the three wise men from the east to the manger where Jesus Christ was born.

Christmas celebrations usually commence well in advance before December 25 all over the world. The first aspect of that celebration is Christmas shopping. This is mainly purchases involving new clothing and Christmas decorations.

It is during the couple of days before December 25 that shopping for the dinner table is carried out. The midnight mass on December 24 heralds the start of the Christmas celebrations and churches will be fully packed by devotees. A Christmas cake accompanied by wine is an integral part of Christmas celebration. In traditional Christian homes, Christmas celebration lasts for twelve days from December 25 to January 5 which is also called twelve tide.

One unique aspect of wishing Christmas is “Merry Christmas” and not “Happy Christmas” as in the case of other festivals and National days all over the world. There are some records to show that “Merry Christmas” has been used since the year 1534.

But in view of the COVID-19 pandemic situation how will Christmas 2020 be celebrated? That is a global question in the air since November. There is general consensus among the laity and clergy about toning down Christmas celebrations this time. In Kerala too this is the situation as of now and not many changes are expected. It means the midnight Christmas mass at



## The first Christmas crib was designed and created by Saint Francis of Assisi in the year 1223

churches will have only a small attendance while the big majority of the laity will be attending a virtual midnight Christmas mass. The custom of house-to-house visits by Christmas Carol parties accompanied by Santa has also been dropped at many places.

Christmas celebrations across Europe had always been legendary but this time it will be sober because many European countries have been hit by a second wave of COVID-19.

In Italy, where COVID-19 deaths have soared towards November, there will be no Christmas markets. Though churches will remain open the traditional midnight Christmas mass is unlikely. In France the second lockdown is in force since October and this will be replaced on December 15 with a 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. curfew. The curfew will not

be in force on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. The attendance for all religious services has been restricted to thirty.

In Germany there are restrictions on social gatherings. Between December 23 and January 1 only a maximum of 10 adults will be able to meet at gatherings though children under 14 are not included in that list.

In Spain the limit for Christmas parties is six people and such gathering should be in open spaces. In Austria, under second lockdown, some relaxations are expected but there will be no Christmas markets. In Russia too Christmas will be celebrated with

restrictions. There will be restrictions for Christmas celebrations in the United Kingdom too but with some relaxations compared to other European countries. Authorities in the United States have also warned about the need for strong restrictions during Christmas because “U.S. is heading into a difficult period of the coronavirus pandemic” ... ■



When it comes to sports, each item or event has its own demographic appeal which may vary according to its geographical presence. Some sporting events are confined to certain countries; others maybe share a continental space. But football defies all those boundaries and has been accepted as the 'mother' of all games. With its kind of less-complicated rules, the magic of the 20 mighty - sporty – skilled players(excluding goalkeepers) chasing the earth-shaped leather ball –the football has conquered the planet with its uniqueness and popularity. The same is applicable to the legends of football, but beyond doubt, this sporting event is bequeathed with the lone presence – Diego Maradona



He's going to pass it to Diego, there's Maradona with it, two men on him, Maradona steps on the ball, there goes down the right flank the genius of world football, he leaves the wing and he's going to pass it to Burruchaga... Still Maradona!



Genius! Genius! Genius!  
There, there, there, there, there, there! **Goaaaaaaal!**  
**Goaaaaaaal!**  
I want to cry, oh holy God, long live football! What a goal! Diegoal! Maradona!  
It's to cry, excuse me!



He's going  
Maradona  
Maradona  
down th

he's going pass it to the  
St. Maradona!  
Genius! Genius! Genius!  
There, there, there, there, there, there  
Caaaaaaalll Caaaaaaalll



for Argentina?



Maradona, in a memorable run,  
in the best play of all times!  
Little cosmic comet, which planet  
did you come from,  
to leave so many Englishmen  
behind, so that the country  
becomes a clenched fist

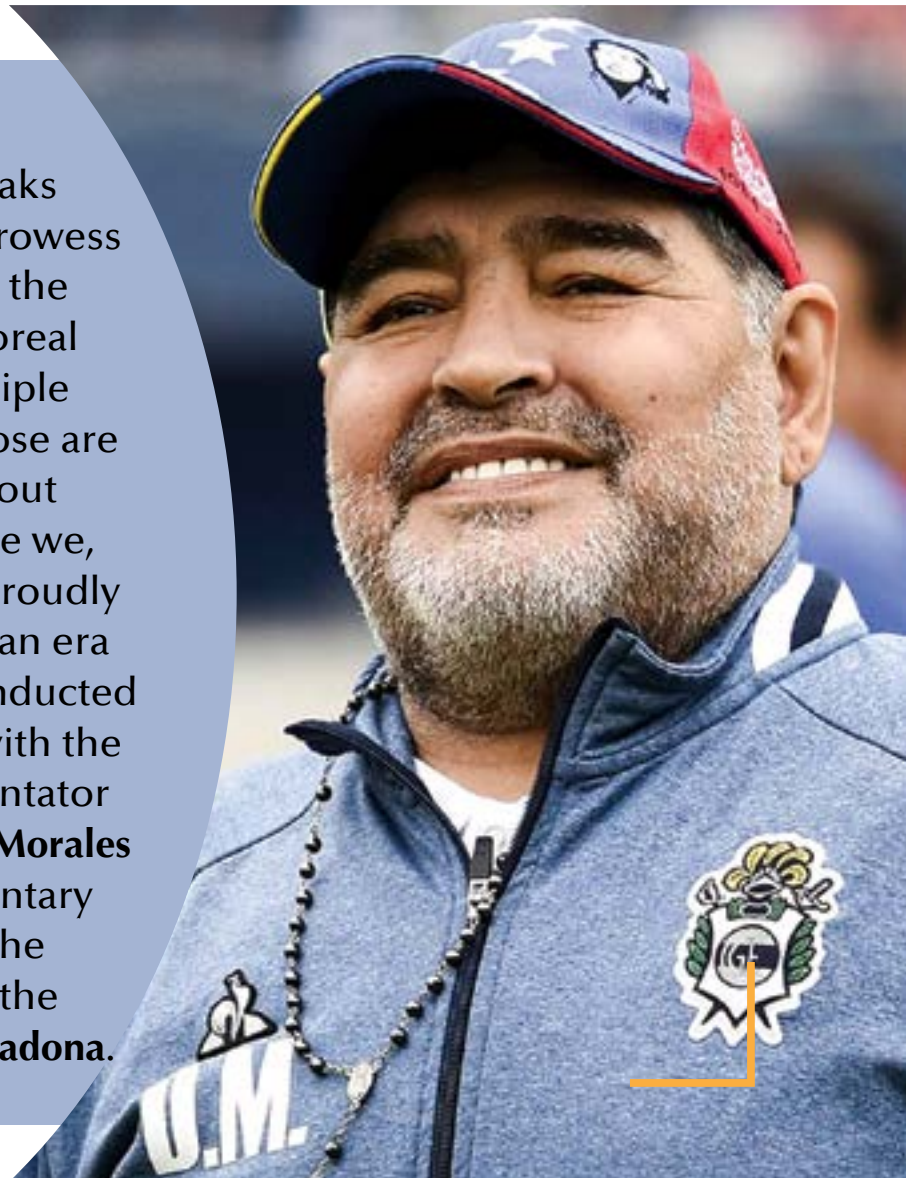
rying for Argentina?  
Argentina 2, England 0!  
Diegoal, Diegoal, Diego Armando  
Maradona! Thank you, God,  
for football, for Maradona,  
for these tears,  
for this Argentina 2, England 0.

C. Rajesh  
Editor

# The 'God-inspired' commentary and the matchless Goal

INTERVIEW WITH VICTOR HUGO MORALES

The name Maradona speaks volumes regarding the prowess of this magical game and the void created by his corporeal leave-taking evokes multiple emotions amongst all those are more than passionate about this game – Football. Here we, the Team **Kerala Calling** proudly bring forth the charm of an era through an interview conducted by the Editor, **C. Rajesh** with the legendary sports commentator of that era - **Victor Hugo Morales** – whose running commentary which added fervour to the immortal goal scored by the football-god – **Diego Maradona**.



**V**ictor, 34 years have elapsed since 'the little cosmic comet', as you mentioned in your legendary commentary, netted the Goal of the century through an 'unforgettable run'. The goal as well as the commentary enthralled millions of soccer fans across the world. You thanked God for watching that Goal and shed tears of joy. What individualizes that goal from other goals from other legends?

▶ It is still a work of art. It is the play of all time. My gratitude was because of what happiness football and Maradona can give us.

*Maradona sensationalised every goal and brought forth emotion to the world football to a great extent. How do you see it?*

▶ He was an artist; art always excites us, because it makes us think that we all rise up in that manifestation. *The substantial skill and talent of Maradona were not visible during the World Cups of 1990 and 1994. What happened to the genius of the legendary left-footed footballer after the Mexico World Cup?*

▶ In 1990 he played injured, by dint of courage and his goal pass against Brazil, converted by Caniggia shows him with his talent intact, even when physically injured. The team was inferior to that of 86. In 94, his goal against Greece was a collective action of enormous beauty and his final finish keep it current. Of course, the feat of 86 was unduplicable even for Diego himself. *Maradona is glorified for scoring the Goal of the Century and his insane dribbling skills are par excellence. He is also famous for the infamous 'Hand of God' goal'. Victor, you being one of the eyewitnesses of that goal, what can you say personally about the 'Hand of God' goal'?*

▶ In the narration I was as sincere as it should be. I said "hand" in the final moment and I agree with the protest of the English. But that type of trickery is part of the game, it happens all the time. If we back and look at every unfair play or act of cheating action that you can go back and verify, we have to play again all the of football in history.

*Your legendary commentary career spans over decades. Being a football commentator and widely regarded as a football scholar, you must have noticed the talent of many other soccer legends, both past and present. What marks off Maradona from other legends?*

▶ Maradona's is the complete manual of the game. There may emerge equal or greater men but at the same time one who is a genius, courageous, altruistic, a leader in the locker room and on the field, a team-player despite his virtuosity? It's unlikely.

To have been all that an artist can be ineffectiveness and gravitas. Pele was extraordinary but his art was inferior. His team managed without him because he

was not the leader. His perfect World Cup was in 1970, accompanied by five players who in each position were the best in the world. Messi is a phenomenon, but he has not yet served as a leader. The rest, the greatest, in front of those named, are second down the line. There are tens of soccer geniuses. The glory goes the names given, and to that can be added to Distefano, but in a lower quality football.

*Since the stepping in of Maradona, especially with the Mexico world cup, Argentina has won over millions of hearts across the world. In my state Kerala, Maradona and Argentina are widely being celebrated. How do you comprehend Maradona's influence in creating more Argentina fans in various countries?*

▶ A source of pride for Argentina. The name of the country celebrated all over the planet, in the most remote, humble corners. But not only Argentina was benefited. Soccer too. Great men give lustre to the activity they choose.

*His life and play were intertwined and inseparable. Every moment of his was just like celebrating a wonderful, unique goal. As a bosom friend of his, how do you comment on this?*

▶ Diego's life was celebrated in each goal. It was the moment in which he reached happiness, that is so transitory and difficult to manage. Maradona inhaled life as if it were the wind that passes through him. But in each strike of happiness, there was never comparison with what he felt on the field

*How do you feel your camaraderie with Diego?*

▶ Respect and a match of fencing. I loved that man because when I treated him in the programs that we did together on television in two World Cups, he was good with all of us who surrounded him. We used the respectful "usted" Spanish pronoun form of addressing each other, but he told me at the end of the programs in an embrace that I "gave him peace". It was what this man needed, in the midst of the problems with which he lived. Diego's life was impossible. Only Maradona could bear it.

*Your call of the play was as legendary as the goal itself. As it happened and afterwards, what were your thoughts? What do you think now having it in the context of the time?*

▶ I recently listened to a version of it replayed in India and it was a great compliment. Someone who took my call and translated it, and related it with equal emotion. A stroke of fortune, a fact inspired by the genius of Maradona-a loss of certain modesty, behaving like someone who is in a trance of excitement and delirium. ■

*The Malayalam version of the commentary of Victor Hugo Morales was done by Shaiju Damodaran, FIFA recognized commentator.*

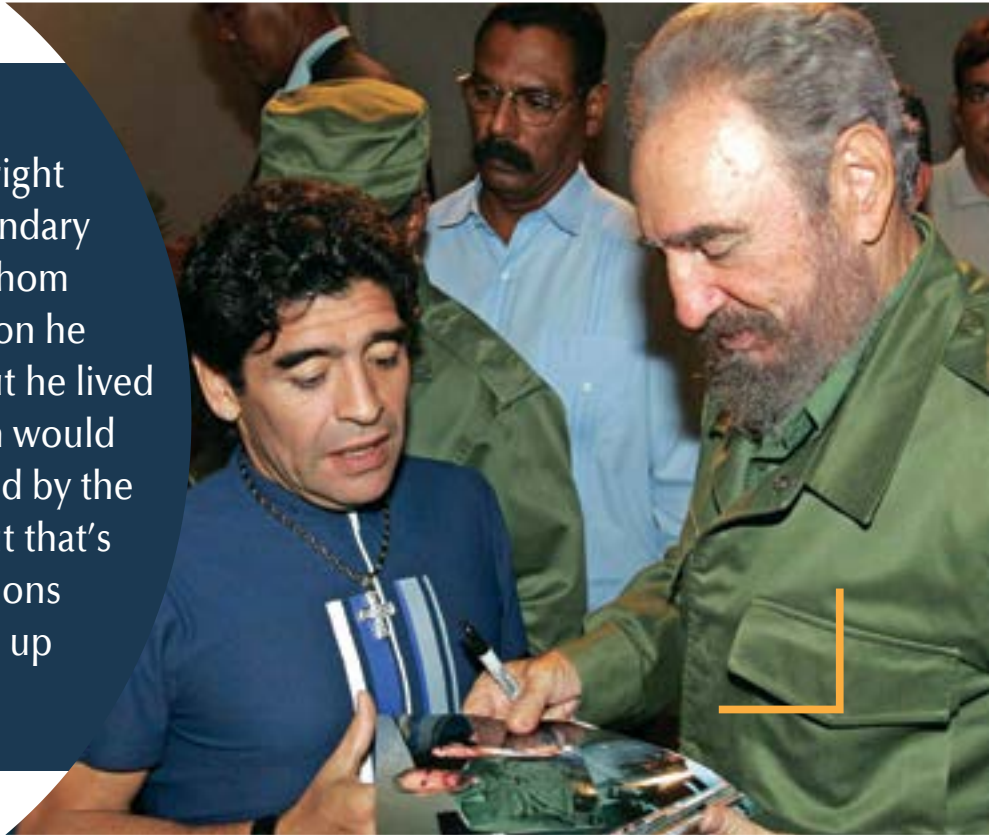


Sabin Iqbal

Freelance Journalist-Writer

# The flawed rebel with a bohemian spirit

He etched Che on his right biceps, and on his legendary left leg, Fidel Castro, whom he credited as the reason he was alive, after God. But he lived a life of excesses which would not have been approved by the two revolutionaries. But that's Maradona—contradictions and contrasts conjured up his whims.



Yes, I was crying for Maradona, the genius with feet of clay, whom God sent to the earth to play sublime football and show to the world that the 'beautiful game' becomes a thing of beauty only when it is played by men of emotions, not robotic men who do everything (politically) correct.

Only Maradona could punch a ball into the net, and

shamelessly celebrate the goal. Peter Shilton, the English goalkeeper whom Maradona tricked with his 'hand of God' push, still calls the Argentine a 'cheat'. He can't forgive him. But, neither can he dismiss the diminutive Argentine as crass because of the sheer genius of the second goal—arguably the best solo run in the history of football. They call it 'the goal of the century'.



In 1986, Maradona was anointed to play sublime football. Ask the Belgians. Ask the English. Or, ask fans like me, who was 16 then, and an unapologetic fan of Maradona. He 'singlehandedly' took home the FIFA World Cup.

There were occasions when he let us down. That too, for prolonged spans—when he indulged himself in drugs, drinks and debauchery; when he created halos of cigar smoke around his head; when he brandied a gun at reporters; when he celebrated promiscuity.

As an editor of a sports magazine in Dubai, I had written his obit over a decade ago when he was reportedly in his death bed. But he overcame the tackles of death, went to Castro in Havana where he recuperated. Little did I, and the millions of his fans around the world, expect a sudden exit. But, that's him.

There are players who have scored more goals than he did, there are players who are role-models for our children but there have been few players who have worn their passion on their sleeves like Maradona did.

You could find a thousand flaws, a multitude of inequities in him but on the turf, with the ball, Maradona was impeccable—be it dribbles past half

## They call it 'the goal of the century'

a dozen defenders or a solo run, wrong-footing and eluding the tacklers, with the ball magically stuck on his feet, and then the salvo at the net! And, the excess of celebration!

He lived like he played: indulging in excesses.

There have been few players who have worn their passion on their sleeves like Maradona did



He drank, smoked, danced, and partied hard, like a true bohemian. The flashes of genius on the ground were the extension of the quintessence of the man. He was the most fouled-against footballer. Excess, what else!

The cultish love for Maradona cuts across borders and cultures. Fans of Argentina's footballing rivals too love him as much as they feared his supreme skills. In Kerala, he was the reason for the huge fan following for Argentina.

I wiped away the lonely left tear, and opened YouTube. I didn't want to watch any of his goals, which I have

## The cultish love for Maradona cuts across borders and cultures

watched time and again all these years. I watched him warming up before a UEFA Cup match. The rhythm of his shaking, his gambolling, and the chemistry with the ball. Like the horse-whisperer, he mumbled something, and ball susurrated around his bouncing feet.

Maradona, the man of many flaws who loved the excesses in life with a bohemian spirit of late afternoon light. Maradona, the footballer to whom the game is obliged for lifting it from the mundane to the celestial.

The rebel whom God anointed, thank you! ■

*Sabin Iqbal is a journalist and author of critically acclaimed novel, The Cliffhangers*



Sanil P. Thomas  
Sports Journalist

# The immortal Rossi-days

Paolo Rossi was widely regarded as one of the greatest Italian footballers of all time. Pele named him among the 125 all-time greatest football players. He did not have the dribbling skill of Maradona, but more opportunistic in scoring goals.



When the World Cup 1982 started, Brazil were the favourites with Socrates, Zico and Falcao in the line-up. But Italy won the Cup with Paolo Rossi, the 25-year-old striker as the game-changer.

Italy qualified for the finals with the second position behind Yugoslavia in Group V European qualifying round. And in Spain, the twotime winners just managed to get in to the second round after the dismal show in the first round consisting Poland, Peru and

Cameroon. They drew all three games and went through only on goal superiority over Cameroon

But the entire situation changed from the next round with the legendary performance of Paolo Rossi.

Manager Enzo Bearzot banked on Rossi. He rose to the occasion and goalie cum captain Dino Zoff embraced the FIFA World Cup. With six goals to his credit, Rossi won Golden Boot for most goals, Golden Ball for being the best player of the tournament and



went on to win Ballon d'Or.

When Rossi passed away at the age of 64 at Siena, he was survived by his wife Federica Caopelletti and three children. The Soccer world was shocked by the demise of yet another legend. The soccer fraternity just digested the most unfortunate death of Diego Maradona a few days back.

Rossi and Maradona were completely different. Rossi fired the Azzurri to the title triumph in 1982 whereas Maradona ensured it for Argentina in 1986. Italy started the 1982 tournament with three uninspiring 'draws' and later came to life thanks to the astonishing performance of Rossi. In fact, he almost missed out on the tournament having being caught up in a bribery scandal and banned for three years in 1980 but was cleared to play after two.

"How badly Italy want back Paolo Rossi after serving two years banishment for being involved in a match-fixing scheme (more as dupe than regular participant)". Philip Evans wrote in his book World Cup 1982.

"Italy began dismally in Spain, but once past the first phase, they developed into a formidable team;

**With six goals to his credit,  
Rossi won Golden Boot for  
most goals**

beatcup-holders Argentina 2-1 and Brazil 3-2, with the hattrick that knocked the best football team out of the tournament coming from Paolo Rossi, who had

**Rossi was widely regarded  
as one of the greatest Italian  
footballers of all time**

just returned to the game after a two-year ban". Wrote Albert Sewell in The New Observer's Book of Soccer.

In the semi-final, Rossi scored the two goals that beat Poland, and in the Final, he scored the first goal against West Germany. Italy won the match with a 3-1 score. Rossi scored off a cross by Gentile in the 56th minute.



Rossi was also a member of the Italy side that finished fourth in Argentina in 1978. He scored three goals in the 1978 World Cup. He made his professional debut for Juventus in 1973. Rossi scored 20 goals for Italy in 48 matches.

**Pele named him among  
the 125 all-time greatest  
football players**

Rossi was widely regarded as one of the greatest Italian footballers of all time. Pele named him among the 125 all-time greatest football players. He did not have the dribbling skill of Maradona. But he was most opportunistic in scoring goals. His moves were wellcalculated. All of a sudden he comes on to the striking position as he watches the cross or lob or whatever may be it, so keenly and connects it superbly. Some sort of improvisation, it can be termed. The ultimate result is the goal. He finishes it very smoothly. In body language and contacts, he was calm. The cool, gentleman to the core is no more; leaving behind football charm for a lifetime. ■

# The adorable wizard of tinsel town

Kim Ki-duk leaves behind a matchless legacy of cinematic boldness and brilliance. His formidable filmography will continue to excite film lovers across the world and the man will be revered for his uncompromising originality and steadfast commitment to his art.



Not every arthouse icon gets mobbed in a city half the continent away from his homeland. But in 2013, Kim Ki-duk generated quite a stir in Thiruvananthapuram, drawing a solid crowd of cineastes wherever he went. The Korean filmmaker was the cynosure of all eyes during the 18th IFFK since his films had achieved a cult status in Kerala by then. Passers-by flocked to him for selfies, star-struck motorists ran to him abandoning their cars in the middle of roads and delegates ditched screenings to get a glimpse of him. The auteur was greeted by wide-eyed

admirers at every entrance and every theatre, a novel experience for Kim himself despite being a celebrity in festival circuits.

For many, he was the maestro who introduced them to a rare breed of cinematic sensibility where Zen serenity meets sadomasochistic mayhem; over-the-top gore dissolves into unapologetic self-indulgence. He was a master who conjured a canvas and then simply set his characters loose, slowly building a wild crescendo. Often, he put on screen protagonists who were damaged beyond all accepted standards of



ethnography and anthropology. His screen was populated by pimps and prostitutes, vagabonds and rapists, mobsters and petty thieves.

Kim Ki-duk was born in 1960. Being a maverick in filmhood, he introduced many experiments in the Korean cinema in which the counter-aestheticism was the pre-dominant one. He grew up in the rural province of Bonghwa and during his early years he worked in sweetshops, served in the South Korean Marine Corps and attended a theological school. He later relocated to Paris to study fine arts and made his debut in 1996 with Crocodile, the first in a string of several low-budget films. It was The Isle (2000), a hopelessly dark ballet of brutality and artistry, that garnered him global attention.

## For many, he was the maestro who introduced them to a rare breed of cinematic sensibility

It was reported that a couple of delegates fainted during the film's screening at the Venice Film Festival, unable to stand its gruesome rendition. But Kim went ahead to concoct macabre portraits and made violence almost a discourse through his later films like Bad Guy, Pieta and Moebius. There was



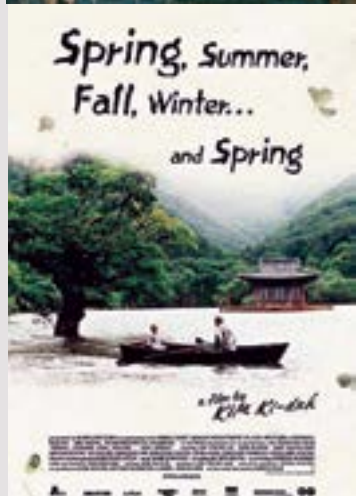
no method to his madness, as it hit true maniacal heights in Moebius. His anarchic narratives probed the fringes and dark underbelly of Korean society leaving the audience both entranced and unnerved. He orchestrated concerts of raw violence as his characters hardly followed mainstream morals.

## He often used silence as a tool to amplify the shock value



For them, crime was more of an etiquette, a code inscribed in their DNA. At the same time, most of his film bore a cryptic charm even when he was exploring the extreme end of hardcore violence. It was never possible to dismiss them as simple, wince-inducing gore fests. While Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter...and Spring and 3-Iron are pure poetry in parts, Arirang was shot during a guilt-ridden exile at a forlorn mountain cabin in the dead of winter. In his films, scenes are shot from a distance with frequent close-ups and POVs and he often used silence as a tool to amplify the shock value.

Kim Ki-duk is perhaps the only South Korean director to win accolades at all A-listed global festivals including Cannes, Venice and Berlin. While his Samaritan Girl bagged the Silver Bear (Best Director) at 54th Berlin International Film Festival in 2004, he won the Silver Lion (Best Director) for 3-Iron the same year at the 61st Venice International Film



## He orchestrated concerts of raw violence as his characters hardly followed mainstream morals

Festival. He received the Un Certain Regard prize at Cannes Film Festival for Arirang in 2011 and then the Golden Lion at 69th Venice International Film Festival for Pietà in 2012. In 2017 Kim Ki-duk was embroiled in a #MeToo Scandal with three actors accusing him of sexual assault. The filmmaker retreated to himself after a messy legal battle and Dissolve (2019), his unexpected swan song, was shot in Kazakhstan. He was planning to film his next in Latvia, one of the Baltic states, when succumbed to COVID-19. In spite of all his worldly flaws, Kim Ki-duk leaves behind a matchless legacy of cinematic boldness and brilliance. His formidable filmography will continue to excite film lovers across the world and the man will be revered for his uncompromising originality and steadfast commitment to his art. ■



N. Bhadrans Nair  
Executive Editor,  
Indian Science Journal

# Soil health needs urgent attention

World soil day once again reminds everyone regarding the significance of its conservation. Every attempt to save our planet has to be connected with the upkeep of soil, otherwise, the consequences will be more than calamitous.



India has witnessed tremendous industrial growth during the two waves of liberalisation – first in the 1980s and later in 1991. In the 1980s, industries were deregulated and the country was gradually opened to foreign trade. A slew of reforms in 1991 dismantled the interventionist and protectionist model of the industry to a more liberalised, market-driven one.

The growth of the industry has its advantages and disadvantages too – advantages in terms of increased economic activities, progressively contributing to improved quality of life. Conversely, the structural

changes in the economic state of the nation have brought in a new set of problems – environmental degradation and pollution.

Pollution has affected the three essential elements that sustain life – water, air and earth. In the 1980s, water pollution had become a national issue and the then Central Government had set up a separate body to address the pollution of one of the largest rivers, which drive the economy of almost the entire north India – the Ganges. Thousands of crores of rupees have since been spent to de-pollute the Ganges, which



holds a special place for Indians – spiritually and economically.

While the Ganges still remains polluted, barring some cosmetic improvements, air pollution has added to the woes of human existence, especially in many cities. In recent times, air pollution has been a greatly deliberated and debated topic. Several cities in India have been mapped as ‘highest polluting cities’ in the world.

## Pollution has affected the three essential elements that sustains life – water, air and earth

industrialisation and commercial farming is the earth. While water and air pollution have received national attention, earth or soil pollution as a threat to human life has by and large been ignored at a broader level, largely due to the absence of any comprehensive data.

Soil resources in the country face threats from the use of contaminated organics, irrigation water, atmospheric depositions, spillage of effluents etc. Release of industrial and urban effluents into water bodies contaminate the vast area of soil resources and groundwater bodies, affecting crop production, which gets back to human and animal health through the food chain.

Latest available estimate shows, the total sewage generation in the country was about 61,754 million litres per day (MLD) and 501 MLD from certain highly polluting industries, according to the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change. Out of the sewage generation in the country, only 37 per cent is treated, while the rest goes back to the ground.

## Before it becomes too late, it is vital to shift to scientific application of fertilisers

Closer to home, Greater Kochi is among the cities in India which are critically polluted. According to a study on Soil Pollution in India, the Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI) rating of Kochi is 75.08.

Farm scientists say, soil health in most regions in India is degraded, which contributes to the health and well-being of the people. A recent study by Delhi based Centre for Science & Environment (CSE) found nitrogen pollution of surface and groundwater due to imbalanced use of fertilisers in India has reached alarming levels. Chemical fertilisers are currently the major emitters of nitrous oxide gas (N<sub>2</sub>O), which is a potent greenhouse gas and ozone - depleting substance.

Sustainable management of soil and agriculture is a solution to global warming. India is a signatory to achieving Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030 and by adopting sustainable farming practices, the country can meet its commitments.

Besides chemical fertilisers, excessive farming practices such as in-field burning of crop residues – which also contributes to air pollution, excessive tillage, flood-based irrigation can contribute to degradation of the soil health and undermine the ecosystem.

One of the main reasons for nutrient imbalance in India is heavy subsidies on urea. “This has led to excessive use of urea in agriculture over the other chemical fertilisers. In fact, the share of urea consumption among all nitrogenous fertilisers is the highest 80 per cent in India, compared with 23 per cent in the United States and Europe, 54 per cent in Brazil and 46 per cent in China,” said the study by CSE.

Before it becomes too late, it is vital to shift to the scientific application of fertilisers according to the requirement of the soil and simultaneously promote the use of organic fertilisers, bio-fertilisers and compost for improved soil health and better yield. ■

## One of the main reasons for nutrient imbalance in India is heavy subsidies on urea



Jisha Surya  
Freelance journalist

# For an inclusive post - Covid era

Life's challenges become manifold to those with some sort of a disability, but the ones who have dared to attempt a faceoff with those shortcomings – something they don't agree with – have made life as typical as it could be, even in the time of the pandemic.

*Rincy Joseph & her son Alan*



“As the world recovers from the pandemic, we must ensure that the aspirations and rights of persons with disabilities are included and accounted for in an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post - COVID-19 world. This vision will only be achieved through active consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations,” opined António Guterres, secretary-general of the United Nations. He was commenting on “Building back better: towards an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post- COVID-19 world by, for and

with persons with disabilities” - the theme of this year's international day of persons with disabilities which was observed on December 3. Kerala alone has around 8 lakh persons with various disabilities.

### **Open discussions could make changes**

Staying home with minimal social interaction might be a new experience for many persons. However, for children with intellectual inadequacies and their parents, the pandemic has given others a glimpse into their lives. Rincy Joseph, founder and chairperson of ALAN T21 Welfare Trust, who has devoted her life for

## Kerala alone has around 8 lakh persons with various disabilities

the welfare of children with down syndrome said that around 80-90 % of parents with intellectually deficient children are living in a socially isolated state. "Among parents, mothers are the most affected.

So the pandemic situation has not made any change to the lives of children with neurodevelopment disorders and their parents. I think Covid has made others understand the difficulty of living in a socially alienated situation. Closure of special schools and



Ashla

therapy centres have affected a lot. A minority of parents, including me, who have devised their schedule for the development of their kids, have found the situation more manageable," she said.

Towards an inclusive post - Covid society, Rincy believes that there must be open discussions on intellectual disabilities and issues associated with it. "There are people who have no idea how to manage issues related to the sexuality of their kids. They have no idea whom to turn into

for advice. This happens because people do not openly discuss such issues," Rincy commented.

## Staying home with minimal social interaction might be a new experience for many persons

"Around 80 % normality can be achieved through early detection, early intervention and proper therapies. Interventions often happen after the age of six, by the time crucial period will lapse. Proper use of

mass media and social media could provide enough awareness," she suggested.

## Access to sign language interpreter

The first couple of months during the pandemic was highly

stressful for Sanu P. Chukkiri, who works at a Global Insurance firm in Technopark. Being Deaf, Sanu said that lack of enough information in an Indian sign language related to Covid 19 or lockdown had raised concerns. His concerns were eased only when National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH) started an Indian sign language programme to provide the latest updates. Though things went upside down for him initially, Sanu is now happy to have enough family bonding time at his home.

For an inclusive post - Covid era, Sanu believes that every institution must have a facility for an Indian sign language interpreter to address the needs of Deaf persons.



Sanu P. Chukkiri

## Around 80 % normality can be achieved through early detection

Stating that a large number of Deaf graduates are jobless, Sanu opined that it was not fair to reject candidates at an interview just because they are Deaf. "Employers should show some patience, provide ISL interpreters, invest time to provide training and address concerns of differently-abled persons," he said.

## Need representation

Being paraplegic with limited social life, Ashla Rani, the trustee of Pallium India, did not find much difficulty in managing the Covid time. Her supportive firm too helped in managing situations without difficulty. However, she has seen how several disabled persons suffer during a pandemic due to various reasons. "When infected with Coronavirus, the health of some persons with disabilities had severely deteriorated as they had to stay away from their caregivers. Pandemic affected plans of persons with disabilities who worked to earn even a meagre sum to stay independent. For persons with family issues, programmes organised by various groups were a major relief, but that too stopped." said Ashla. ■



Abhilash S.



Saranya G.



Abhiram C. S.

*Department of Atmospheric Sciences, CUSAT*

# The Warming Arabian Sea & Tropical cyclones

Owing to many a number of reason, climate changes are happening frequently. How vulnerable our part of the land is not just a curiosity but a much deeper fact that has to be comprehended with the right scientific analysis.



The word “cyclone” is derived from the Greek word “cyclos”, meaning “coiled like a snake”. Though Tropical Cyclones are the “generic name” of the rotating storms, they are known by various names in different parts of the world.

Tropical Cyclones are the most disastrous weather events that affect the Indian peninsular coasts surrounded by the Arabian Sea (AS) in the west, the Bay of Bengal (BoB) in the east and the Comorin Sea in the south. These cyclones are a major threat to the

highly populated coastal cities of Indian peninsula.

Tropical Cyclones generally form over warm ocean basins, where sea surface temperature (SST) is above 26 degree celsius. Each cyclone case is unique with different degrees of influences of the relevant genesis parameters leading to different tracks and modes of development.

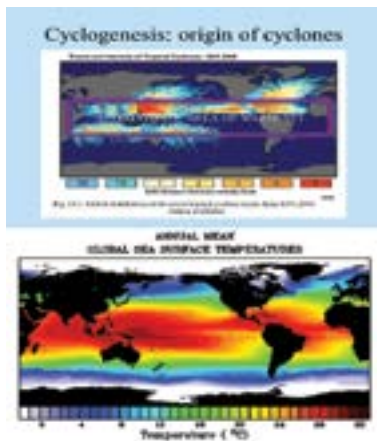


Fig. (a) Global distribution of Tropical Cyclones and (b) Sea Surface Temperature

In 2019, Arabian Sea witnessed 5 cyclones as compared to its normal count of 3 and the year 2019 corresponds to positive IOD phase. In the recent decades, it is observed that the Arabian Sea is getting more and more favourable for cyclogenesis.

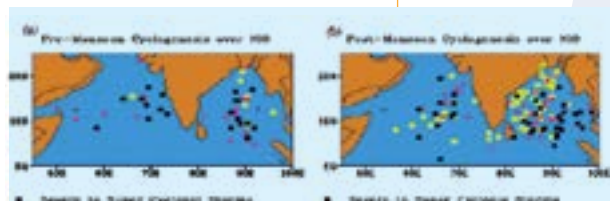


Figure 1 Cyclogenesis locations over NIO during (a) Pre-monsoon and (b) Post-monsoon periods from 1991-2017

Recent severe cyclonic storms namely, Nilofar, Chapala, Megh, Ockhi, Luban, Gaja, Kyaar, Maha observed during post-monsoon season over Arabian Sea during

## Tropical Cyclones are the most disastrous weather events that affect the Indian peninsular coasts surrounded by Arabian Sea

recent years are clear indication of increasing frequency of severe cyclonic storms over Arabian sea during post-monsoon season.

Over the years, the cyclone prediction and watch have advanced a lot mainly in the shorter time-scales with the advent of weather satellites. It is now much easier to observe the storm genesis, development and progression which are a great benefit to the cyclone warning community. But warming global temperatures and climate variability in the recent decades have changed the storm patterns which make it difficult to predict these systems beforehand due to which extreme gusts and mass destruction of farmlands are caused by severe weather associated with the storms.

The two dangerous pathways There are two pathways through which cyclone may attack the Kerala coast. In the first pathway, cyclogenesis occur near the south west of Srilanka around Comorin region and intensify further and reach close to Kerala coast

as fast as Ockhi developed. In the second pathway, Cyclogenesis can happen far away from Kerala coast in the Bay of Bengal as Burevi formed and sometime

cross Srilanka coast and enter to Kerala after making landfall in Tamilandu. The first pathway is more dangerous than the second one as cyclogenesis happen very close to Kerala coast and we may not get sufficient lead time for disaster preparedness as observed during Ockhi.

The second pathway is safer as far as the Kerala coast is concerned,

## In 2019, Arabian Sea witnessed 5 cyclones as compared to its normal count of 3

since cyclogenesis occurs far away from Kerala coast and provides us with sufficient lead time for preparedness. Another advantage of second pathway is that, after making landfall, cyclones generally weakens as the large moisture supply from warmer sea surface will be cut off and there will be reduction in cyclone force wind in the presence of large trees, buildings and Western Ghats.

Appropriate strategies may

## There are two pathways through which cyclone may attack Kerala coast

be devised depending on the location of cyclogenesis. The first pathway along with rapidly intensifying storms like Ockhi will have the potential to produce more damage over both land and Ocean. The unpredictable nature of the cyclones in terms of sudden changes in the intensity, track and uncertainty induced by global warming may be taken into account or factored into the disaster management plans for the safety of the lives and livelihoods of the coastal communities. ■



Dr. Raja Varier

Director,

Centre for Performing and Visual Arts  
University of Kerala

# Those 'dramatic' days...

Malayalam theatre movement has a history of evolving through various streams to strengthen it. This has grown and established by accumulating and integrating various factors from all over right from the prehistoric period. This remained as tribal, ritual, folk and classical forms. The colonial intervention brought in realism and paved a new path for the traditional performances. Like in other parts of India, Kerala also witnessed an amalgamation of the Western style with the native style and the latter attaining supremacy.



The translations of Sanskrit and European dramas are seen as the origin of theatre movement in Malayalam by historians. Even though there exist varying observations regarding the beginning, the play

Mariyamma authored by Polachirakkal Kocheepan Tharakan in 1903 is considered as the first drama in Malayalam. By the middle of 1960 new trends took shape in the theatre performances.





The 'Professional dramas' staged here still remain as an extension of the earlier Parsi theatre. Professional dramas were staged at the cultural functions organized by local groups and in festivals. At a time when there were no other modes for entertainment in the evenings, there was a good scope for theatre.

The amateur theatre movement succeeded in bringing

**It was during the year 2000 the amateur theater in Kerala became live in experimental theater.**

changes even during this period.

It was during the year 2000 the amateur theatre in Kerala became live in experimental theatre. The focus of the movement shifted from realistic plays to those engineered to suit different occasions.

Renowned playwright Dharmaveer Bharati has said "the strength of a good drama lies in its written script. Drama lies in the strength and rhythm of the words. While making a drama you have to find out the music veiled in every written word. You have to understand the silence between the words. For a drama, the spoken word is the most important factor". There are a few experimental dramas that have scripts based on the established drama literature in recent times.

American theatre Director and writer Mel Shapiro has opined that the soul of a play lies in its language.

**The importance of body language came to the fore by the end of the Twentieth Century**

The musical feel of every drama is derived from the expertise in using the same.

The significance of body language

The importance of body language came to the fore by the end of the twentieth century. Since extra importance is given for the visual impact there has been neglect and trespassing of the script during the last decade. The recent trend laid emphasis on visual performances based on literature instead of original drama scripts.

Natakam – drama – has many definitions. Inside of a village – Natinakam – is Natakam or drama is one. One thing is certain. Kerala has a rich heritage of this art form in the village gatherings where quality plays displaying the ethnic culture of the place were displayed. These were the 'outbursts' from easy - hearted souls. It is doubtful if a time would come again for the display of those 'innocent feelings' in an era of urbanization. ■





Dr. A. S. Vysakh

Assistant Professor  
Department of History & Research Centre,  
Sree Narayana College, Chempazhanthy.

# The Muffled voices of the Dutch in Kerala

"I see cemeteries as a kind of open-air museums full of art and history and stories and nature and wildlife, gardening... When you go to a graveyard, you see what's important to a society, what gets remembered."

Loren Rhoads



As the 'Cosmos Malabaricus' project has been conceived to shed light into the history of Kerala using archival material about Dutch East India Company available in India & the Netherlands, there exist several treasures about a monumental Dutch epoch in Kerala, whose voices are still muffled largely by negligence. However, the material traces of colonialism are found as Forts, mansions and

graveyards. Though forts and colonial mansions have been exploited centres of tourist attraction, colonial graveyards are seldom beheld with curiosity.

Cemeteries have a deep historical connection to the local community. By looking at the headstones and reading details about those that have passed, we can gain information on the importance of individuals to the community at the time and the jobs and social



connections they had during their life.

The religious-cultural impact of the Dutch is largely in oblivion. Other than the fortresses and travelogues, material evidence of Dutch in Kerala exists as less - known memorabilia in the still sleepy and crumbling graveyards in the erstwhile places of Dutch influence. These circuitously fixes the missing links of European ancestors who once toiled for fortune in the 'God's own Country'.

Although not situated in Kerala now, the tomb of D' Lannoy at the Udayagiri Fort at Puliyoorkurichi on the Thiruvananthapuram -Nagercoil National Highway in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu could be historically placed under Kerala. Eustache de Lannoy was one of the captives of the Battle of Colachel in which MarthandaVarma of Travancore defeated the Dutch in 1741. D' Lannoy breathed his last on 1st June 1777. He was buried in the church inside the fort.

The Dutch Cemeteries are located at Thangasseri in Kollam and Fort Kochi in Ernakulam. Saint Angelo Fort at Kannur also possesses Dutch gravestones of historic importance.

The remnants of a rich colonial past still linger in the

## The colonial tombs or gravestones shed light into certain historical realities

cultural life of Kollam, the invigorating ancient port town in Kerala. Other than the Fort at Tangassery, the colonial period graveyard with its innumerable

## The taboo associated with Catholics prompted the Dutch to erect a separate cemetery exclusively for the latter

ruined graves still bearing colonial architectural impressions are of high historical antiquity.

The cemetery in its structural patterns resembles the one at Cochin. Typically European, made of bricks and lime plaster, it encompasses marvellous pillared columns etched with geometric designs. The tombs once possessed inscribed memorabilia.

The legacy of the Dutch Cemetery in Fort Kochi showcases certain historical vagaries of our colonial past. Being the oldest European cemetery in India

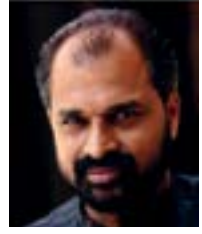
## Cemeteries have a deep historical connection to the local community

consecrated in 1724, it is a revealing aide-mémoire of Dutch lives lost in the pursuit for trade and expansion.

The hospital and cemetery belonging to the Portuguese situated on the west of the Parade Ground. The taboo associated with Catholics prompted the Dutch to erect a separate cemetery exclusively for the latter and was sited between the Lighthouse and Bank House in Cochin. It is built in Dutch architectural style and the year of its consecration is engraved on the entrance pillar.

The major remnant of the colonial era of North Malabar is St. Angelo Fort, jutting out into the sea like a bird's beak. The Dutch VOC captured the Saint Angelo Fort on 13th February 1663, originally erected by the Portuguese. The only Dutch gravestone to have been preserved stands on the ramparts between the Holland Bastion and the Zeeland Bastion inside the Fort.

Interestingly, the colonial tombs or gravestones shed light into certain historical realities such as the status of health, reasons for death, diseases, positions and portfolios held by the deceased, variant architectural patterns and even pregnancy disorders, birth and death rate, infant mortality rate, etc. In fact, 'Reading' a Cemetery is thus art in itself, revealing the hushed voices of the departed. ■



P. K. Rajasekharan  
Senior Journalist

# The K.P Appan School of elevated thought

Literary criticism in Malayalam evolved into another literary bough, thanks to the innovative ways of none other than the ace-critic K. P. Appan, who left the literary world twelve years ago.



The genre of criticism emerged in Kerala when there was no real clarity about the role of literary criticism or the critic. At a time when critics were looked upon as custodians of tradition and guardians of value, and criticism were equated with interpretation,

M. P. Paul arrived on the scene to argue that criticism was a different kind of art. With Kesari Balakrishna Pillai's entry, literary criticism became an independent genre and forum for predictions, fearless opinions and thought. His *Navalokam* (1935) and *Roopamanjari*

All of K. P. Appan's works are aesthetic trees that invite readers to view them, consume their tasty fruits, and perch on their branches that blossom with the beauty of spring

(1937) would, years later, shine the path towards modern criticism that came into being through K. P. Appan.

Espousal of an aesthetic that went against tradition and openness to the new genre of the novel was what made Paul, Kesari and Appan links in the same chain. Appan's first work *Kshobhikkunnavarude Suvishesham* (1973) contained studies on the theoretical underpinnings of modernist literature, and carried a vision of the new world similar to that of Kesari. This and his next work *Thiraskaaram* (1978) made him the high priest of modernity. What he attempted was not to interpret modernist works but rather to explain and locate them. Appan's articles explained the theoretical foundation and vision of modernist literature and imagination.

Twelve years have passed since K. P. Appan's demise but his critical standpoints stand relevant. His world of ideas may not seem attractive vis-à-vis the latest literary thoughts, or his exegetical methods exemplary to the new age critics but his comments on the stature and independence of critics continue to be a source of sacred inspiration. After all, he always spoke of finding new paths and cultivating the courage to reject. Instead of adopting a critical methodology which placed undue stress on literary theories, Appan focused on epistemological experiences and unfamiliar promises of enjoyment that a literary work offered. Precisely for this reason, he rejected the paraphrasing style of old academic scholars that avoided aesthetic analysis. Equally, he maintained a distance from new academic templates in which theories became 'master discourses' that enjoyed greater authority than literary works and the studies they generated.

About his life as a critic, he said, "The cultural unconscious of my art of criticism is philosophy. What I seek in literary works is a philosophical

awareness about life." But this does not mean he advocated any specific philosophical system.

Articulation of one's philosophical awareness about life, his most favourite tenet and stand in criticism, was what constituted a writer's freedom, as he never tired of repeating. The factor that led Appan to the idea of an independent artist was the result of the failure that overcame different kinds of attempts, undertaken at various points of time in Kerala, to determine the nature and course of action of literature according to the organizational nature, interests and ideology of party politics, and the inability of corresponding interpretative and exegetical projects to appreciate great works of literature or radical aesthetic experiments. Freedom, to Appan, was the inspirational power and source of energy that triggered the creation of literary works capable of giving original and lofty aesthetic experiences.

To critics, writers and literature students who followed him, K. P. Appan's legacy lay in the fact that he lived and wrote in freedom, without becoming a slave to any particular philosophy or political ideology.

Appan strongly believed that "the aim of criticism is to discover the mystery behind the long journey undertaken by the genius of a writer beyond the community," "a re-evaluation does not mean repetition of traditional values," and "the goal of literature is to take tradition to creative realms, wherever it is

Appan focused on epistemological experiences and unfamiliar promises of enjoyment that a literary work offered

possible". That was why as a critic he could recognize the spirit of resistance within modernism, and also play a major role in explaining its historical as well as imaginative aspects and in establishing it.

All of K. P. Appan's works are aesthetic trees that invite readers to view them, consume their tasty fruits, and perch on their branches that blossom with the beauty of spring. Through each, he revealed that criticism is not a world that frightens readers away with ossified thoughts, scholarly pride and tradition worship but a form of art that enjoys as much freedom as poetry, novel, painting, sculpture and music. Even his opponents cannot deny the beauty of his language or the courage of his independent viewpoint. ■

# When songs personified



C. S. Meenakshi  
Writer

Renowned for rendering any difficult composition with much ease and mellifluousness par excellence, Vani Jayaram has won many an accolade during her extensive singing career.



Five decades have elapsed since the dawn of a star in the skies of India's film music. The highlight of this singer was the metallic timbre her melodious voice possessed. Yes, you guessed it right. It was Vani Jayaram, called lovingly *kalaivani* by the Tamil people. She started her career in Hindi film music. Born in Vellore in Tamilnadu to Doraiswamy and Padmaavathi in 1945, she owes her musical talent to her mother who was a trained Carnatic singer herself and was keen in nurturing her children in the path of music. All the 9 children including Vani were trained in Carnatic music. It was only Vani who made it to the film world. The turning point came with her shifting to Mumbai after marriage. Her husband Jayaraman who was a sitar player himself was instrumental in sending her

to Ustad Abdul Rehman Khan of Patiala kharana for training in Hindustani music. After rigorous training in thumri, bhajans, gazals and like for six months, Vani started giving Hindustani semiclassical concerts. The renowned music director Vasanth Desai happened to hear her singing and signed up with her for the movie *Guddi* directed by Hrikesh Mukherji. The first song recorded was a *meerabhajan*. It was the great Hari Prasad Chaurasia who played flute for this bhajan. The song *Bole Re Pappihara* in rag *Meghmalhar* became an immediate hit nationwide. The other song in *Guddi* 'hamko man ki sakthi dena' (rag :Kedar) was accepted as school prayer in those days. *Guddi* came out in 1971 and there was no turning back for Vani who continued

to reign South Indian film music world with her melodious voice and versatile style. Her first song with MSViswanathan(MSV)' mallikai mannan mayangum'in Tamil spread the fragrance of her voice further. The resonating ragamalika song Ezhuswarangalukkul by MSV won her the first national award in 1975.

Vani competed with herself when her songs in two superhit movies Meera in Hindi and Sankarabharanam in Telugu came in the fray at the national level. Sankarabharanam won her the second national award in 1980. The great musician Pandit Ravisankar composed all the 14 songs sung by Vani in Meera.

She has more than 20000 songs to her credit in 18 languages. She has won national award thrice and state awards and film fare awards several times. But sadly, Kerala is yet to recognize this versatile singer with a state award.

It was in 1973 that she sang her first song in Malayalam for the film Swapnam. The song penned by O N V Kurup and directed by MBS had its first line 'sourayudhathil vidarnnoru kalyanasougandhikamani bhoomi' - aptly depicting the celestial nature of her singing. Her voice range, grasping power, quality of diction and ability to adapt to any difficult composition soon made her the favourite choice of most of the composers. She sang for veteran music directors like MBS, Devarajan, Sankar-Ganesh, M K Arjunan, Dakshinamoorthi, Salil Choudhuri, MSV, A T Ummer, R K Sekhar, Syam and K J Joy.

She has sung songs of varied genres in Malayalam including romantic melodies, devotional songs, fast numbers and songs in humorous and melancholic moods. She has a number of sweet duets to her credit sung with great singers like Yeasudas and Jayachandran. She has sung quite a few chorus songs as well. Her voice suited all sort of songs though her speciality was semiclassical songs.

### Her romantic melodies include

*Kattu chennu kalebaram thazhuki*,  
*Ente kayyil poothiri (sammaanam (1975), Vayalar, Dakshinamurthy)*  
*Natanpattile maina (Rragam (1975), Vayalar, Salil Choudhuri)*  
*Thiruvonappulari than (Thiruvonam, (1975), Sreekumaran Thampi, M K Arjunan)*  
*Pathmatheerthakkarayil (Babumon, 1975, Mankomb Gopalakrishnan, MSV)*  
*The dithedi njanalanju (Sindhu (1975), Sreekumaran Thampi, M K Arjunan)*  
*Kunkumappotiloorum Kavithe (Palkkatal 1976, Sreekumaran Thampi, A T Ummer)*  
*Ashadamasam (yudhabhoomi (1976),*

*Mankomb Gopalakrishnan, R K Sekhar*  
*Nayaka Palaka (Lakshmi vijayam (1976), Mullanezhi, Syam*  
*Seemantharekha yil (Aseervvadam (1977), Bharanikavu Sivakumar, M K Arjunan)*  
*Ponnumkudathinoru (yudhakandam (1977), ONV, K Raghavan)*  
*Etho janmakalpanayil (Palangal, 1982, Poovachal Khader, Johnson)*



### Some of the duets are

*Mavintekompilirunnoru, Valkkannezhuthi, kannuneerinu tata, kurumozhimullappooove, ezham malikamele, Devi Sreedevi, Nanamavunno, Pakalswapnathin, manchadikkunnil*

### The chorus songs include

*Ayilyam padathe penne, swarnnameeninte, thattheyyathom,*

The **semiclassical** numbers are

*Hindolaraagathin, Sapthaswarangalatum, Thruppayarappa, Nilavilakkin thirinalamay Eethupanthal kandalum, Noopurametho, Dhum dhumthana, Konchum chilanke*

Ragam Sreeragam in this category deserves special mention as she is singing the ragas Sree, Hamsadwani, Vasantha and Malayamarutham elaborating the arohanam and avarohanam of each raga. The deftness with which she sang songs with juggling chain of words like kannil chundil, Dhum dhumthana, manjin thereri is really appreciable. Her pronunciation of words and the diction of Malayalam was as perfect as that of a native. Her voice quality in high pitch and the expressions she imparted to the phrases enhanced the mood of the songs.

True to her name Kalaivani, she is a versatile artist trying her hand in poetry, Embroidery and painting. She was an arduous debater and an actor who won many accolades while in college.

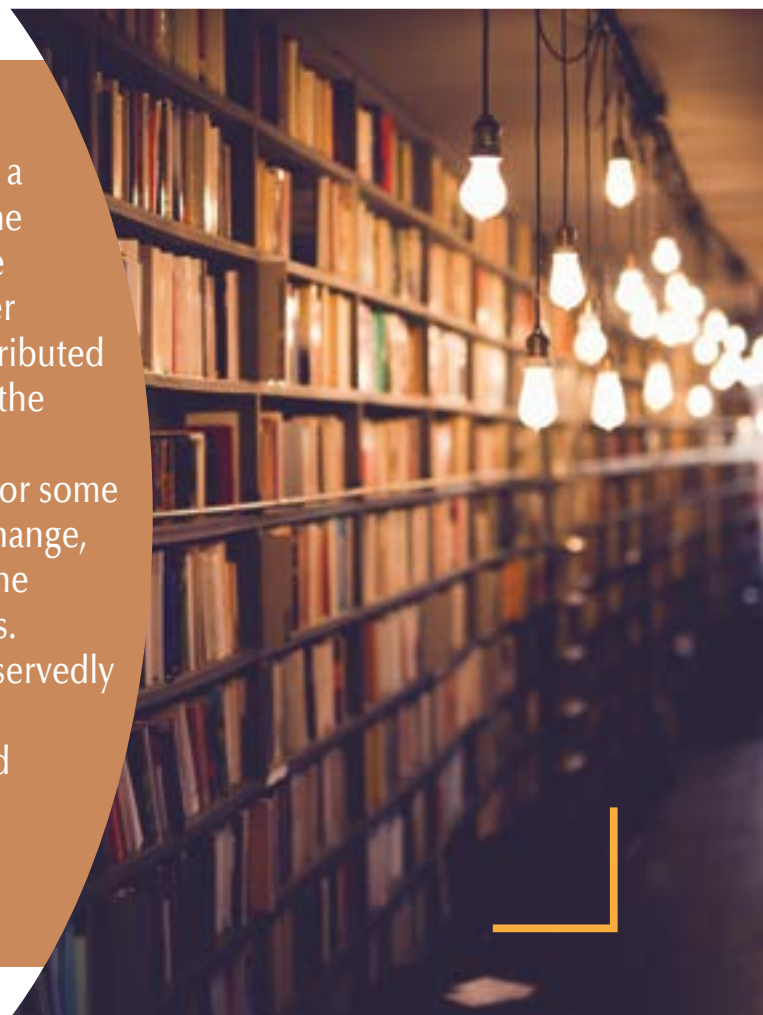
In her career spanning five decades, she has more than 600 film songs and more than 100 album songs in Malayalam to her credit. Her recent duets Olanjalikkuruvi (with P Jayachandran, Gopi Sundar, movie 1983, 2014), Pookkal (with K J Yesudas Jerry Amaldev, Action Hero Biju, 2016), Peythozhinja nimisham (with P Jayachandran, Captain, 2018) and the solo Manathe marikarumbe (gopisundar, Pulimurukan, 2016) continue to be popular hits. ■



C. Radhakrishnan  
Writer

# The novel-ways of Malayalam

When it comes to literature, Novels have a 'novelty' attached to it over time. From the magnitude of the subject to the structure it holds, a unique stature other than other genres of literature. Malayalam also contributed aplenty both in content and variety over the years of novel-history. It is hard to name someone a stalwart or to discard others for some reason. Novels have paved the way for change, taste, and lifestyle and even influenced the political mooring of several organisations. Transcultural exchanges happened unreservedly with the advent of this writing-form. Here **C. Radhakrishnan** the celebrated writer, who is renowned for his novels, throws light into the annals of novel-history of Malayalam.



One of the very best novelists of Kerala, UA Khader, just passed away. He was eighty-five and ailing for a while. A storyteller unique, he dug deep into the subterranean levels of folk cognizance and unearthed archetypal images together with the lore embalmed with them. This made a

fabulous reading. None could match him in this game. Born to a Keralite father and a Burmese mother, he was imbued with rare cross-breed vigour of creativity. He loved everything Keraleeyam with a rare passion. A lovable friend and an eminently worthy son of the land, Kerala bids him a tearful farewell.





The Novel is a late literary form even to the Continent where it evolved. In Kerala, it has a history of just a little over a century. But it has done very well during this short while.

Malayalam has had very precious contributions in this genre in comparison with the States adjacent to it and the rest of India.

Of course, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana have had their stories told in Kerala too in both poetry and prose. But one may disturb a hornets' nest if one even suggests these are stories and not realities. Anyway, let us forget about these as they are not event narratives in the sense novels are.

What did the novel do in the upbringing of Kerala culture? What did it contribute to the continuing process of a renaissance in Kerala? As a literary form that did not need any special education for appreciation, novels have been widely read. They have nourished and fostered the egalitarian outlook of the Malayali. They have helped cultivate

**There was hope, rebellion, despair and disillusionment - all in a short period**

communal amity and tolerance. Also, they have very well reflected the psychic curvature of the region vis-a-vis its commitment to cosmopolitanism.

## The Novel is a late literary form even to the Continent where it evolved

Novels here were eager to accept, assimilate and adapt to whatever was coming in. All told, it was a very taxing exercise because all social and cultural changes that came to Europe after Science and Technology developed thereabouts over a period of more than 500 years cloud-burst over Kerala in just less than fifty years. It was tumultuous, to say the least. Waves and waves of schools resulted.

There was hope, rebellion, despair and disillusionment - all in a short period. However, even when the rest of the world gave up on the left moment the Kerala mind-set held on to its love for social equanimity and human equality, thanks to the literary ethos of the novel contributing to it.

Kerala is the only place in the world that saw all different kinds of cultures, religions, ideas and philosophies visiting and getting settled over thousands of years. Kerala was the first land Judaism built a place of worship outside its place of origin. Same way, Christianity built its first church outside the continent of its origin right here. Again, Kerala offered the same hospitality to Islam. Whatever

## As a literary form that did not need any special education for appreciation, novels have been widely read

arrived was received well while whoever came did not come barging in using weapons until the Portuguese came with their guns and cannons. As a result, Kerala became the ideal mould for cultures fusing together to form a composite whole for the world to follow tomorrow when all barriers and borders and weapons go. It is a heartening thought that in Kerala novels has done their part in cultivating the concern for freedom, liberty and equality in good form, even fine-tuning it.

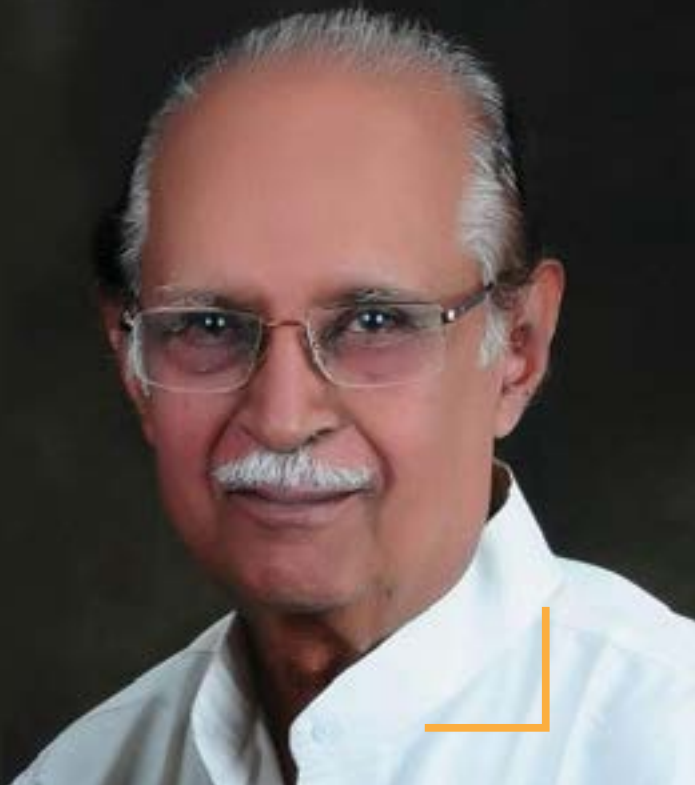
Let me conclude this small note saluting the great stalwarts of Malayalam novel and welcoming the fresh sprouts enthusiastically growing. ■



Dr. B. Sasikumar  
Agri-Writer

# Firm friend of the Farming Fraternity

R. Hali(1934-2020), hailed as the apostle of agriculture in the State epitomized the quintessential agricultural extension leader, inspiring a legion of Agri professionals & students, farmers, peers and policy makers with his immaculate style and flamboyance. The hallmark of down to earth approach, motivational quality, ability to find virtues in the common men around him and inquisitiveness, endeared him to all those come in contact with.



Though started his career with the Rubber Board, left the job to join the then Thiru-Kochi Agriculture Department as Agricultural Inspector and rose to become the Director of Agriculture Department - Govt of Kerala. He retired in the year 1989.

As the Director of Agriculture Department, he was instrumental in 'radicalising' the State agriculture sector with innovative programmes like paddy group

farming, starting 'Krishi Bhavans' and leveraging the print and electronic media in disseminating farm information and technology.

Of all the role donned, Hali will be ever remembered for his stellar performance as a farm journalist and he is better known to the public through his articles in the newspapers as well as the TV and AIR programmes, hesteered! He led the popular programmes like 'VayalumVeedum'(AIR) and 'Noorumeniyude

## Hali will be ever remembered for his stellar performance as a farm journalist

Koithukar' & 'Nattinpuram'(Doordarshan) which were instant hits. Through these columns/programmes, he showcased the success stories of many farmers which provided a new dimension to the social status of the farmers and farming.

Farm Information Bureau (FIB) was his brainchild and he was its first Principal Information officer. Hali helmed 'Kerala Karshakan', the farm magazine of FIB for many years and made it a household name!

A prolific writer, Hali authored more than 6000 popular articles on agriculture besides publishing books like 'Krishi Patom', 'Survey of Important

## He was instrumental in 'radicalising' the State agriculture sector with innovative programmes

Agricultural Markets in Kerala', 'Fruit trees', 'Clove', 'Vanilla', 'Farm Journalism' etc. He was the first recipient of the 'Karshaka Bharthi' award for farm journalism.

Even after retirement, Hali was a stable presence in the agriculture sector of the state with his advisory roles for the last three decades beside his active presence in the Agri-columns of Newspapers, Door Darshan and AIR programmes. And in that sense, he never retired from his passion for farming and farmers!

Ministry of Agriculture of the Central Government was renamed as 'Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare' in 2015 based on the vociferous appeal by Hali.

## A prolific writer, Hali authored more than 6000 popular articles on agriculture

A native of Attingal, Thiruvananthapuram, born to P. M. Raman and M. Bharathi, R. Hali (86) breathed his last at his daughter's residence in Alappuzha. 'Karshika Keralam' will pine for his presence for long years to come, as Hali being a fixed deposit to Agriculture Kerala! ■

## NEWS SCAN

### Taller to become the tallest, once again

The world's tallest peak is getting taller and taller again. Nepal and China jointly announced the new height of Mount Everest - 8848.86m; till this finding it was 8848.



This is the first time that China and Nepal

unanimously have agreed on the height of Mount Everest. Neither of them earlier agreed on the height, since China didn't consider the height of the snow at the peak instead measured only the height of the rock whereas Nepal, included the height of the snow in calculating the mount's total height.

### Keenan, the VACCINE's –first!

Margaret Keenan, 90 year old grandmother in Britain who became the first person in the world to get the Pfizer covid -19 vaccine. A former jewellery shop worker who had 2 children and four grandchildren lives at Coventry city in Central England. Keenan was administered with the vaccine at a local hospital in Coventry.



Britain one of the worst affected countries in the pandemic became the first to approve the Pfizer vaccine for common use. Britain's National Health Service conducted the vaccination campaign extensively.

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