



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Sevalaya's News Letter

Love 1

APRIL - 2006

Serve 1 Price Re. 1

Dear Friends,

Year after year, we get many colleges and schools coming to Sevalaya to conduct 'National Service Scheme' (NSS) camps. Each camp will be for around ten days and nearly 50 to 60 students will come and camp in Sevalaya campus. A.M.Jain college, Queen Mary's college, Presidency college, Ethiraj college, Kannika Parameswari college, Anna university, Gill Adarsh school, Adarsh Vidyalaya school, etc. are some of the colleges and schools who have conducted NSS camps at Sevalaya.

We insist that such camps should be full of physical work and students should not mind doing any sort of work. There can be some amount of literary discussions, sharing jokes etc., but the main goal is to perform hard physical labour. In this context, we insist and draw out a plan of action for each camp, even before we confirm the dates for the camp.

During such camps, the students lay roads, clean village temples and temple tanks, work in Sevalaya's agriculture fields, take classes for the children, spend time helping senior citizens, perform street plays in the villages around. They use the Sevalaya's library to get to know the philosophy of Gandhi, Vivekananda and Bharathi. They also interact with the Sevalaya staff and trustees and understand the basic philosophy of Sevalaya. Sessions are arranged by Sevalaya to inculcate a sense of service into the youth's mind.

On the last day, Sevalaya takes feedback from all participants to see how this program can be improved in the following year. One major improvement this year will be such a 'NSS camp' will be organized by John Hopkins University from USA. So far we have been getting campers only from Chennai schools and colleges. Now the message has spread so wide that an American University is going to send students to Kasuva Village, this year.

We are expecting nearly 30 to 40 students from USA, who will come and stay in Sevalaya campus. They have been already warned that they may have to sleep on the floor, eat the simple food in Sevalaya, along with the children and do hard physical labour! Yes, they have very happily accepted all this and confirmed that they will be doing this camp. We have had individual volunteers from many countries like Germany, Swiczerland, USA, UK, Japan etc., but this will be the first time that a group of nearly 30 to 40 students from USA will be serving in Sevalaya. It will be very interesting to see how the children and the senior citizens will communicate with them. It will be more interesting for the villagers, who are going to have a totally new experience in witnessing these young chaps taking up voluntary work in their village.

The small-unknown village Kasuva, has found a place in the world map!

Thanks & Regards
Murali

Temple cleaning in Thiruninravur



Sevalaya stall in TCS office, Solinganallur



Events at Campus

The Annual Sports meet was held at Sevalaya Service Centre on 11/03/2006. Many sports events were held for Children, senior citizens and parents. Mr. Elangovan, Superintendent of Police of Thiruvallur District presided over the function and distributed prizes to the winners.

A farewell meeting for the students who completed XII standard in the current academic year was held on 24/03/2006. Mr. R. Ratnam, Executive Director of Wholistic Health and Growth and Mr. P.Dharmarajan, President of LIC Agents' Association were the Chief Guests. The Chief Guests, the trustees and the teachers felicitated the students. G.Iaiyaraja, an old student of Sevalaya and now a software engineer participated in the meeting. He called upon the outgoing students to maintain their links with Sevalaya by attending all functions and events at campus and actively participating in the Old Students Association. The Old Students Association decided to meet on the first Sunday of every month.

External Events and Programmes

Sevalaya children participated in the Rural Level Sports Competition held at Ikkadu on 26/02/2006 and 27/02/2006 and won many prizes. Sevalaya's team participated in the Throw ball Tournament held at Amudha School on 19/03/2006 and were the runners up. They also participated in

the District Level Sports Meet on 25/03/2006 at TI School Ambattur, organised by District Sports Officer and won prizes in different categories. Following is the list of prizes secured by our students.

200 mt. Running Race
S.Alagiri 3rd place

300 mt. Running Race
S.Baby 1st place

400 mt. Running Race
R.Kavitha 2nd place

600 mt. Running Race
V.Banupriya 1st place
S.Baby 2nd place

800 mt. Running Race
R.Lakesh 1st place

Shot-put
A.Tamilselvi 1st place
S.Alagiri 3rd place

Manali Sports Club conducted Hand Ball match on 25/03/2006, in District level. Our Hand Ball Team got third place in it.

NSS camps

The Gandhi Group of NSS Students held an half – a – day camp at Balakrishna Nagar, Thiruninravur on 02/03/2006 and cleaned the temple.



On TV...

Win TV telecast a half an hour programme on Sevalaya Hostel, School and Old Age Home on 25/03/2006.

Students Study Circle

P.Amul reviewed the book "Woman Achievers" (Tamil) by Mr. Eranjan on 04/03/2006. S.Suguna spoke about the book "Philosophers" (Tamil) by Veda Narayanan on 11/03/2006. S.Suganthi reviewed the book "Nattukku uzhiha Nallavar Shivaji" (Tamil) by Mr. M.V.Venkatraman on 25/03/2006.

Study Circle

"Neuro Linguistic Programme" by Steve



Andrews was the book discussed by Mr. P.Narayanamoorthy on 04/03/2006. Mr. C. Saravanamoorthy shared his thoughts on the collection of Tamil poems "Udaintha Nilakkal" (Broken Moons) by poet Pa. Vijay on 11/03/2006. "Adolf Hitler" authored by John Toland was Mr. Mohan's choice for discussion on 18/03/2006. Mr. Shanmugam reviewed the book "You are Born to Rule" (Tamil) by Mr. Soma. Valliappan on 25/03/2006.

Temple Visits

Boys of Sevalaya hostel went to the Vinayaka Temple at Ramanathapuram Village on 03/03/2006 and 17/03/2006. Girls of Sevalaya hostel went to the Vinayaka Temple at Ramanathapuram Village on 24/03/2006 and 31/03/2006.



A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiyar, in his Pudhia Athichoodi, sets out a formula for success in one's endeavours. "Think good; work incessantly; what you desire shall come to pass." In another poem, he submits his prayer to God to grant him clear vision, will power to act, and in turn fruits of the work. He also elaborates this theme in the preface to his Tamil rendering of Bhagawad Gita.

The first question is, what should one aim to achieve? What tasks can one take up? It should be for the benefit of oneself and others. It should be based on the principle of Love all and Serve all.

Clear vision of the goal to reach and clarity of thought about the means to adopt are essential. Clarity of thought implies no sinful thoughts which are the root cause of worries. When the heart is pure, clarity of mind is achieved. When the heart is pure, and mind is clear, whatever steps one plans to take, will always be right. It does not require any great intellectual prowess to chalk out a good plan of action. Bharathiyar says that pure, unsullied and unperturbed common sense is the most supreme knowledge. Gandhiji did not make any claim to superior intellect, but he made no secret of the fact that all major decisions in his life were taken on the basis of his inner voice. He surrendered himself to the Will of God, kept his mind always pure by observing rigorous austerities in pursuit of Truth and Ahimsa. Bharathiyar also speaks of the Inner Ear that opens up as a result of prayer.

The work we take up need not be physical. It may be mental, artistic or intellectual. The tasks that Bharathiyar assigned to himself were "poetry; toiling for the Nation; not resting even for a moment." No work is superior or inferior. One may be the ruler of the land, or a petty peddler of plantain fruits. What matters is that one should be honest in his dealings. For Gandhiji, a lawyer's work had the same value as that of the barber. Swami Vivekananda would say: "A man should not be judged by the nature of his duties, but by the manner in which he does them. A shoemaker

who can turn out a strong nice pair of shoes in the shortest possible time is a better man according to his profession and work than a professor who talks nonsense every day of his life."

Now, what follows is to start working, working incessantly applying shoulder to the wheel. What deters one from doing this? Doubt. Lingered doubt about the goal itself and the steps that are taken. There is a tendency to go to the basics and re-analyse the whole thing. While course correction, when needed, and reversing the goal itself when the circumstances change are all right, it will not do to go on mulling over things when the need is to push forward. "The doubter perishes."—Samsayaathmaa vinasayathi" is the Gita saying. Next pitfall is brooding over the mistakes committed. The right attitude for one would be to ask oneself, "Tathaa kim?" -What Next? - and proceed further. Bharathiyar would say: "The past will not come back, O! Fools! Don't fall into the pit of killing and die there"... " Resolve firmly in your mind that today you are born anew!"

The greatest deterrent to good performance is attachment to the results. The frequently asked question is how can one work if one does not have passion for the work. It is simple. The player has to fix his attention on the ball rather than on the scoreboard at every ball he faces. Played well, score automatically follows. The energy that ought to be spent on doing good work should not be frittered in feelings which shatter our nerves, disturbs our minds and affects our calmness.

Concentration is essential. The doer must find his identity totally with the task on hand. The difference between achievers and others is in the concentration one bestows on the work. Swami Vivekananda says that this concentration can be achieved by self-discipline and practice.

With clear vision, clarity of thought, perseverance, hard work, and faith in God, success is bound to follow as day follows the night.

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