



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Love 2 **Sevalaya's News Letter - August 2007** Serve 5 Price-Re.1

Dear Friends,

What a transformation it is in 19 years time! I still remember that we used to go from hut to hut in the villages near by Sevalaya and also all the 'temporary' huts inside the brick kilns, begging parents to send their kids to the school. They used to laugh at us say that it was a waste of time and they will not get any money if they send the children to school. They very strongly believed that as they or their parents didn't go to any school to get education, it follows that their kids also need no education. All our appeals combined with all the free offers of books, note books, uniforms etc., fell on deaf years. We were worried if we will be able to meet the minimum numbers required in each class to go for the un-aided recognition.

Slowly the momentum picked up. They saw that our offers were real and many children going to school in brand new uniforms, carrying books and note books, and they didn't pay anything for it! There were many visitors to the school, many programs, good lectures, dance, plays, sports etc. Slowly the village was becoming a different place!

Couple of years later, we stopped going from hut to hut, as the hut dwellers were coming to the school and asking us for admission. The mothers realized the benefits faster than the fathers. The elementary school, became high school and then the high school became the higher secondary school. The school toppers were getting admission into very good colleges, also sponsored by Sevalaya. Children, who finished education, started getting into good

jobs. Children, who didn't do so well in academics, learnt a skill and were self employed. And all this service for free! This year we reached the peak. The school is built to take 1000 students and we are almost full now. 19 years ago, people refused to come to school and today same village is proud of a school accommodating 1000 children. There was a massive rush for admissions. Some of them came with recommendations from high powered people! Some of them said that they will pay any fee the school demands. We had to refuse admission to such people, as the school is open only for those, who will not be able to pay any fee. But as we had reached the full capacity, we had to turn down many people, who deserved a seat. Even if they are poor, we can't mindlessly go on adding children, beyond the capacity of the current school building.

But it was painful to send people back. We had no choice, as we had a limit on the building capacity. Some of the comments made by the mothers who were not lucky enough to get seat in Sevalaya for their children, - "If Sevalaya says no to us, where can we go?", - makes us think. Is it time to think of another school building? Are we to go beyond the 1000 mark? Success has its problems. The society is pushing you to succeed more.

Are we ready to go beyond 1000?

Thanks & Regards
Murali



'Perunthalaivar' Kamarajar's Birthday Celebrations

Events

A meeting of the Parents of students of Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School was held at Sevalaya campus on 01/07/2007. 500 parents from the nearby villages participated. They expressed their solidarity with Sevalaya, which is providing quality education to their children absolutely free of cost and thus plays a major role in breaking the vicious circle of poverty they are entangled in.

The Birth Anniversary of K.Kamaraj, great Congress leader and ex – Chief Minister of Tamilnadu was celebrated at Sevalaya on 15/07/2007. Mr. V.R.Rajan (General Secretary, Tamilnadu, Federation of Voluntary Agencies), Mr. S.N.Amarnath (Advocate), and Mr.Ahmeed, and R.Ravi of 5th Pillar India were the Chief Guests.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Rajan remarked that one of Kamaraj's dream of providing food shelter and education to the down trodden and underprivileged of the society was being rendered by Sevalaya towards nearly 1000 children. Mr. R.Ravi in his speech said that we should emulate the simplicity of Kamaraj in our lives and strive to rid society of corruption. Mr. V.R. Rajan said that NGOs should work together to defeat the forces that unnecessarily tried to hinder the efficient functioning of service organizations. He also assured



Motivation Programme for Higher Class Students



Memory day Function of the Founder of Humour Club Kalakendra P.R.Govindarajan

Sevalaya of the support of the 1000 organisations with TNFVA. Oratorical competitions and culturals were held on the occasion for students and prizes were awarded.

The memory day of the Founder of Humour Club Kalakendra P.R.Govindarajan was observed at Sevalaya on 17/07/2007. Organized by Humour Club International, Chennai Main Chapter, Mr. Lakshmanan, Mr. G.V.Krishnamoorthy, Mr. Bhaktavatsalam and Mr. Sampath of Humour Club International had the audience in splits with their jokes, mimicry and actions. At the same time the thoughts and sayings which were told in between also helped to hone in some essential values. The students of the school were also encouraged to come up on stage and tell jokes and were given prizes for the same.

Mr. Muthiyah Ramanathan, Director, Mind Dynamics Center, conducted a Motivation Programme for Higher Class Students on 22/07/2007, as a preparation for excelling in Board Exams.

Dr. Vijaya Kumar Teotia, Quarantine Officer, Animal Quarantine & Certification Services, Government of India, Pallikaranai, Chennai conducted a Training Programme on Agriculture & Diary Farming on 26/07/2007. The students of Agriculture group in Sevalaya and nearly 25 farmers from near by villages participated.



Training Programme on Agriculture & Diary Farming

Ms. S.M.Saroja, Palavedu conducted a 5 days course "Art of Living" for OAH Inmates from 18/07/2007 to 22/07/2007.

External Events

103 students from Sevalaya and 6 staff members participated in a Seminar on "Global Warming" organized by Exnora International at Valluvar Kottam, Chennai on 20/07/2007.

Mr. V.Muralidharan, Founder & Managing Trustee was an invited speaker at the seminar conducted by National Knowledge Commission, an advisory body to the Prime Minister of India, on educational reforms, held at Bangalore on 17/07 and 18/07/2007.

Mr. Muralidharan, preside over a meeting on "NGO's Role in National Development" organized by Rajaji Centre for Public Affairs on 29/07/2007.

In the Media.....

An interview with Mr. V.Muralidharan was published in Nilacharal, an e magazine released from UK. Please visit http://www.nilacharal.com/enter/interview/sevalaya_322.asp

Tours

25 students and 2 staff members left on a 4 day trip to Thiruvananthapuram on 26/07/2007. They will be hosted by TCS, Thiruvananthapuram office.

Training Programme:

9 staff members from Sevalaya attended the computer training programme conducted by Sutherland Technologies.

Tree Plantation

A tree plantation programme was organized by Lions Club of Chennai Prime on 06/07/2007. 25 tree saplings donated by the Club were planted in Kasuva & Ramanathapuram areas.

School Clubs

In the Tamil Club Meeting conducted on 03/07 and 09/07/2007 students were explained about the classification of land in to five types and the ancient Tamil Literature that evolved around it. In the English club meetings on 03/07, 13/07 and 19/07/2007 students were introduced to English Classics and their authors. Games to improve the students' vocabulary were also conducted. Short cut methods for multiplication were taught to students at the Maths. Club Meeting on 17/07/2007. Students discussed about Water Pollution and ways to purify water in the science club meetings on 04/07 and 11/07/2007. The Social Studies Club met on 04/07, 11/07 and 18/07 /2007 and discussed about Environment and latest World Wonders.

Sports

Sevalaya students won the following awards in the competitions held at district and zone level.

09/07/2007- Thiruvallur Dt. Throw ball Championship – Runners – Girls – Junior team
 09/07/2007- Thiruvallur Dt. Throw ball Championship – 3rd Place – Boys – Senior team
 11/07/2007- Thiruvallur Dt. Throw ball Championship – Winners – Girls – Super Senior
 17/07/2007 – Thiruvallaur Zone – Chess - Winner – M.Arun Kumar – Senior
 17/07/2007 – Thiruvallaur Zone – Table Tennis – Winners – Boys– Senior
 17/07/2007 – Thiruvallaur Zone – Table Tennis – Winners – Boys – Super Senior
 18/07/2007 – Thiruvallaur Zone – Kho-Kho – Runners – Girls –Senior
 19/07/2007 – Thiruvallaur Zone – Ball Bat-Minton - Winners – Boys– Super Senior
 20/07/2007 – Thiruvallaur Zone – Chess – 3rd Place - K.Chitra – Senior
 21/07/2007 – District level Throw ball team Selection at Good Will Matric. Hr. Sec. School, Kolathur – 4 students selected for district level team (R.Selvi, M.Bharathi, S.Indhu & S.Vignesh).

Staff Book Review

Date	Name of the staff	Book	Chapter
07/07/2007	G.Pazhanisamy	The Bible	The Acts
14/07/2007	K.Shanthini	Gita	I Chapter
21/07/2007	R.V.Ragavan	Quran	V & VI Chapters
28/07/2007	P.N.Moorthy	The Bible	Romans

Students Book Review

Date	Name of the staff	Book	Author
07/07/2007	Premkumar	"Ulaga Pathuman"	- Kandasamy Thuraivan
14/07/2007	D.Selvi	"Story about Freedom"	- Shankar
28/07/2007	Raghu	"Nalvazhi Cirukathaigal"	- Na.Ra.Nachiyappan

Visit to Places of Worship

On 06/07/2007 boys were taken to RC Church, Thiruninravur. The boys went to Vinayagar temple at Ramanathapuram village on 13/07/2007. On 20/07/2007 all the hostel children went to Vinayagar temple at Ramanathapuram Village. The Boys visited the Mosque at Melapedu on 27/07/2007.



Harischandra and the Holy Bible

It was the celestial Palace of Lord Indra. Several sages had assembled including Vasishtha and Viswamitra. Indra inquired anxiously whether there were any virtuous kings in the earth. There was a reason for his anxiety. For, Indra-ship automatically passed on to such a king and the incumbent Indra is dethroned. Vasishtha affirmed that there was one such and mentioned the name of Harischandra. Viswamitra who had previous enmity with Vasishtha jumped on his feet and contested this. In the end Viswamitra vowed to part with half of the fruits of his Tapas if he could not prove his point.

He, later went to earth, and pleaded to Harischandra funds for a yagna, got it, but left it in the palace stating that he would take it later. The next step was to engage two damsels. He wanted the King to marry them. Harischandra, who was already married and had a son, declined this offer. Viswamitra got angry and was about to curse him. In order to avoid displeasing a Holy Man, Harischandra gave away his entire kingdom and kingship to the sage. Having accepted it, Viswamitra demanded his pound of flesh—the treasure he left in the palace. He would not listen to the plea that the kingdom he now gifted included that treasure. "Tell me that you have not given me the treasure, and I will give your kingdom back." Harischandra would not go back on his pledged word. It was agreed that he should leave the country with his wife Chandramathi and son Lokidaksha, and earn money on his own to clear the dues. A time limit was set. One Nakshatreya was sent along with the family to oversee their efforts, and to give as much torture as possible.

The family underwent several difficulties on the way. They could not muster resources by the deadline. So, Chandramathi and Lokidaksha were sold to a Brahmin land lord, who mercilessly extracted hard labour from both. Harischandra was employed by an undertaker, as assistant for cremating bodies. He would get a negligible portion of the charges paid by the customers, and the balance would go to his master.

Lokidaksha lost his life while working in the forest,

and the Brahmin would not even grant Chandramathi leave for the cremation, not to speak of providing money. She went alone to the cremation ground, and started preparation for burning the body as she had no money to pay to the undertaker. Both Harischandra and the wife were so disheveled emaciated and changed shape that they could not recognize each other. Harischandra scolded her for trying to cheat him of the wages, and, Chandramathi pleaded mercy as she had no support. Identifying her by her mangalasuthra, which by a divine decree would be visible only to her husband, Harischandra agreed to waive his portion of the wages, but advised her to beg the Brahmin for funds to pay to the Master. On her way back, Chandramathi came to be charged with killing the king's child. Viswamitra created evidence to this effect by his tapas power. It fell to the lot of Harischandra to behead her. At this stage also, it was advised to Harischandra that he would be saved of this entire ordeal by simply telling that he did not promise any money. No, he would not do this. He raised the axe to behead Chandramathi. Lo and behold, there was a miracle; a garland fell on her neck, gods appeared before them. Viswamitra had a change of heart and "all lived happily thereafter."

The story of Harischandra is as valid today, as is the message of truth preached and practiced by Gandhiji. There are people who will not swerve from the chosen path of truth and service, come what may. For the tormentors, the power of tapas may not be there. But the money power and the muscle power are available. There may not be one Nakshatreya but a few more, who have their own axes to grind. Divine mercy may work not directly, but in the form of sincere well wishers who rally round with stronger support. The arrows aimed, and the axes downed will bring forth garlands of accolade.. But it may be too much to expect the modern Viswamitras to have a change of heart.

The moral of the story however is found in the Holy Bible. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven".

Published by: [Bhuvanewari Muralidharan](#) and owned by / on behalf of [Sevalaya](#) and published from [F2, Jains Eden Park, 4 - Judge Jambulingam Road, Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004](#) and printed by: [S.Kannappan @ Gem Offsets, 24 \(Old no.-20\), Swami Achari St., Royapettah, Chennai - 600 014.](#)
Editor: [T.S.Venkataramani](#)

Send your comments to: [Sevalaya, Kasuva, Pakkam \(P.O.\), Near Thiruninravur - 602 024, Tamil Nadu, India.](#)

Phone Nos. : [9444346699](#), [9444620286](#), [9444620289](#), [\(044\) 26344243](#) & [26346162](#).
E.mail : sevalaya@vsnl.com visit at: www.sevalaya.org