



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Sevalaya's News Letter

JANUARY - 2005

Dear Friends,

The music queen of India, M.S. Subbulakshmi passed away in Chennai, on December 11th. At Sevalaya we were celebrating Mahakavi Bharathiyar's birth anniversary on 12th of December. At the beginning of the function, we observed two minutes silence and also sang couple of popular MS songs. I was personally very upset on that day. I have nothing to do with music. I will not be able to identify any ragas or even properly enjoy any song. My respect towards MS was for reasons other than music.

Two things will easily spoil a person – popularity and money. MS was the most popular singer of her times and her music was capable of getting her any amount of wealth. But her popularity or her capacity to earn never affected MS. It is a well-known fact that Sadasivam and MS were earning money only to donate to charitable purposes. Most of her concerts were only benefit programs for various organizations.

MS got appreciation from people no less than Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and other towering national and international leaders. But she continued as a very simple person, accessible to anyone who has interest in music. Many ordinary music lovers have gone to her house and met her and she has sung just for them!

It is not only people in the music world, but the people from NGOs have a lot to learn from the life of MS. I have seen many

NGOs that start with very good intentions, change track when they become popular and when they receive lot of donations. They forget the original goal, they become corrupt, and their path is totally lost. The person running the NGO becomes bigger than the NGO itself. He or she becomes inaccessible to public. There is more interest shown in media publicity and hero worship. The degree of this sycophancy increases with popularity and money.

People forget that the work they do is more important than their own individual popularity; they forget that the money is coming for the work and not for them. This becomes an addiction and they seek more and more publicity and money.

MS never got into this loop. She maintained her simplicity and was never affected by her own popularity or money. There are media reports, which state that she had removed her bangles and donated it to a poor family when they approached her for help for a family wedding. She has done full programs only to raise funds for major temple constructions and NGO projects. It is very difficult to find such a simple and ego less person.

Compared to these qualities, her music is only secondary for me. We may watch her music programs on videos, listen to her music on CDs or tapes, but where can we find such a person again?

Thanks & Regards
Murali



Study Circle Meetings

Date : 04/12/2004
 Book : For Prosperous Living (Tamil)
 Author : Mr. Arjunan
 Speaker : Ms. Vijayanandhini
 Venue : Service Centre

Date : 11/12/2004
 Book : Live perfectly (Tamil)
 Author : Mr. Ramalingam
 Speaker : Mr. C. Saravanamoorthy
 Venue : Service Centre

Date : 18/12/2004
 Book : Dear Brother (Tamil)
 Author : Mr. Abdul Rahim
 Speaker : Ms. C. Dhayalini
 Venue : Service Centre

Date : 24/12/2004
 Book : Interpretation of Bhagavad Gita (Tamil)
 Author : Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiyar
 Speaker : Mr. P. Narayanamoorthy
 Venue : Administrative Office

Students Study Circle

Date : 4/12/2004
 Book : Try Try again (Tamil)
 Author : Mr. Venkatesan
 Speaker : Archana
 Venue : Service Centre

Date : 11/12/2004
 Book : Great Philosophers (Tamil)
 Author : Mr. Vedanarayanan
 Speaker : R. Selvi
 Venue : Administrative Office

Date : 18/12/2004
 Book : Bharathi's Athichoodi (Tamil)
 Author : Nallasivam
 Speaker : D. Selvi
 Venue : Service centre

Events at Sevalaya

Mahakavi Bharathiar's Birth Anniversary

On 12/12/2004 Mahakavi Bharathiar's Birth Anniversary was celebrated at Sevalaya. Mr. Joachim Rau, ISO Lead Auditor from TUV Germany, Mr. Jan – Uwe – Burmeister of Yoga vereinigung Rajagopalan e.V., Germany, Mr. C.P. Chandrasekaran, ISO Auditor from Pune, Mr. Satish Verma, Centre Head of Tata Consultancy Services, Vadapalani, Mr. G. Ramanathan, Centre Head of Tata Consultancy Services Digital Zone, Mr. M. Sivaramakrishnan, Group Leader, Tata Consultancy Services, Vadapalani and Mr. Mu. Srinivasan, renowned Bharathi Scholar were our Chief Guests. Pulavar R. Ramamurthy donated a part of the proceeds of two books written & published by him. Mr. Jan– Uwe – Burmeister of Yoga vereinigung Rajagopalan e.V., Germany contributed towards the purchase of a new van and setting up of a printing press for Sevalaya. Children of Sevalaya, trained in singing by Mr. Murali Krishna, a volunteer sang a few Bharathiyar songs along with him.





Montessori Training

A one day training programme on Basics of Teaching in Montessori Method was conducted for our primary school teachers by Ms. Uma Shankar, Director of Centre for Montessori Training, Chennai on 18/12/2004.

Santa visits Sevalaya

It is festival time as the world celebrates the birth of Lord Jesus. Christmas was celebrated in Sevalaya also on 26/12/2004. Dr.S.Durairaj of Apollo Clinic, Thiruvallur was our Chief Guest. The joy of children knew no bounds as Santa appeared suddenly dancing to the music and jingling of bells and gave them all sweets.

NSS camps

The Vivekananda group of NSS wing of Sevalaya undertook cleaning up of the areas surrounding our campus.

The NSS Students from P N D Adarsh Vidyalaya Matriculation Higher secondary School camped at Sevalaya from 22/12/2004 to 31/12/2004. They engaged themselves in cleaning up the campus, cleaning up nearby temples, conducted a Dental camp, planted tree saplings in the campus and interacted with the children and senior citizens at Sevalaya. They also presented a cultural programme on 25/12/2004.



Street Plays

Our art troupe led by Mr. T.Nagaraj, performed a street play at Vinobhanagar Pakkam on 30/11/04.

External Programmes/ where our inmates, staff, participated...

Sevalaya cricket team participated in the Lions Ranganathan Memorial Trophy Cricket Tournament conducted at Neelankarai by Blue Lagoon group on 03/12/2004.

Our staff Mr. C.Saravanamoorthy & Ms. Vijaya participated in the AIDS Awareness Programme conducted by DIET Thiruvallur from 29/11/2004 to 02/12/2004. Our students Giridhar of XI Std and Yamunarani of IX participated in this programme on 01/12/2004 and 02/12/2004.

Visits to temple

The senior citizens were taken to the Balamurugan Temple near Periapalayam at Thiruvapur on 03/12/2004.

The hostel girls visited temple at Kasuva on 03/12/2004.

10 inmates of the Old Age Home and 10 children went to the Gurudwara at T.Nagar on 19/12/2004.



Miracles Do Happen

Mahatma Gandhi was an ardent believer of God and in the efficacy of prayer. Rama nama was on his lips even when he fell a prey to the assassin's bullet. When a noble task is undertaken earnestly and the right means are adopted, God comes to one's help even when "friends flee " and one is at the nadir of Hope." I have never found Him lacking in response. I have found Him nearest at hand when the horizon seemed darkest. "

Here is an instance. Gandhiji admitted a Harijan family consisting of Dudabai, his wife Daniben and their daughter, Lakshmi, a toddling babe, in the Satyagraha Ashram at the instance of Amritlal Takkar. This caused a flutter amongst the friends who had been helping the Ashram. All money had stopped and also there was a talk of social boycott. Gandhi and his associates decided almost to go and stay in the Untouchables' Quarters and live on whatever they could earn by manual labour. It was at this point of time; children of the Ashram told Gandhiji that a Sheth was waiting outside in his car to meet Gandhiji. " I want to give the Ashram some help. Will you accept it? Did the stranger pose the question. " Most certainly. I confess I am at the present moment at the end of my resources." Was Gandhiji' reply. The Sheth returned promising to come the next day. He came at the appointed time and placed in Gandhiji's hands currency notes of the value of Rs.13000., and drove away. With this in hand Mahatma was able to surmount his difficulties.

A similar "miracle" happened in the life of Swami Vivekananda too. While arriving at Chicago, he was a lone man in a strange land. Yet he did not lose faith. " Here I am amongst the children of the Son of Mary and the Lord Jesus will help me," he wrote to a friend. Unfortunately, he mislaid the address of the committee in charge of the delegates and did not know where to turn for help. No one bothered to help " this foreigner of strange

appearance." He spent the whole night in a huge wagon in the railroad freight yard without food or bed. In the morning, he walked along the fashionable streets asking people the way to the Parliament Grounds. He sat down exhausted on the sidewalk. A lady noticing him from the opposite window called him, enquired of him, gave him breakfast and looked after his needs. She, Mrs. George W.Hale, for that was her name, took him to Dr.J.H.Barrows, the President of the Parliament of Religions, who happened to be her personal friend. The rest of the story, all of us know. The Swami was once again strengthened in his conviction that God was guiding his footsteps.

What about Subramania Bharathi? Similar things have happened many times in his life, when he was in exile at Pondichery. One such instance was when he was at a loss to find means of subsistence for the next hour; he received Rs1000 from Durban in South Africa. The Faithful are never forsaken. He avers that this is the Charter of the four Vedas. In his" Panchali's Vow," when all worldly supports fail, Draupadi, in utter helplessness, as she is forcibly disrobed by villainous Dussasana calls with faith Hari, Sri Krishna for help—and a miracle happens.

"
. As Dussasana dared the outrage
There come robe after robe
By the grace of the Lord
They came without end,
Clothes of colour how many
And colours innumerable.." (P.N.)

There is no doubt that earnest efforts towards right ends by right means win the Grace and Blessings of God. Our children are taught this value. Inter faith prayer, morning and evening, is part of our daily schedule. It may be of interest to know that the elders in our Home, when even a slight occasion arises for friction, start chanting Rama Nama to bring about Shanti. (Tranquility.)

FOR FREE CIRCULATION :

Send your comments to: Sevalaya, #3, First Link Street, Karpagam Gardens, Adyar, Chennai-600 020.

Phone : 24468202 / 24468205 E.mail : sevalaya@vsnl.com visit at: www.sevalaya.org