



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Sevalaya's News Letter

MARCH - 2004

Dear Friends,

There are many small quite temple towns in India. The whole town will be vibrating with spirituality and every person you meet will be a devotee of the Lord. One such place is Srirangam in Tamil Nadu. The pongal prasadam and the natural air conditioning provided by the two rivers on either side, makes even the Lord to sleep continuously. But recently the town was shaken by a tragedy.

Fire accident in a marriage hall killed many people and left many with third degree burn injuries. The bridegroom died in the accident. The bride lost many of her close relatives. The marriage hall suddenly looked like a war front.

People from the surrounding area jumped into action spontaneously. They were from all strata of society. The auto drivers, the rickshaw pullers, some advocates, social workers, and just anyone in the vicinity wanted to help. Many were seen jumping into fire and pulling out people who were caught inside. Some got together and broke the windows on the sides and pulled people out. Many helped to rush people to hospitals and there were many volunteers who queued up to donate blood.

The bridegroom first escaped and came out. At that point in time, both bride and bridegroom were okay with minor injuries. But Mr. Gururajan, the bridegroom realized that his grand father was caught inside the hall. His grand father was nearly hundred years old and was a physically challenged person. Gururajan jumped into the fire and ran inside the hall to help his grandfather. He was not able to come back.

In our old age home, we see many people trying to come and admit their own parents, not even disclosing to us that they are the children of these people. Many try to tell us that they saw these old people on the streets, asking for help. Some of them admit old people and never even come back to see them. One of our inmates wanted to meet his relatives when he was in his deathbed. When Sevalaya informed them, the answer we got was that they have no time to come and see. Till the time of death, no one came, and this man died without meeting his near and dear.

We also meet many parents, trying to admit their own children in our orphanage, telling us that these children were found on the roadside. Few quick questions to these children, we will come to know the truth. We have seen women telling us that their husband passed away and they are not able to support their children, when that 'husband' is just standing there, next to the woman. We have also seen cases where both father and mother had deserted their children and just ran away with a 'new family'.

When we see such people repeatedly knocking at our doors we feel dejected and think that all human relationship has failed. There are no more family values.

The act of Gururajan, sacrificing his life, in an attempt to save the life of his grand father, proves us wrong. Cauvery might have gone dry, but not yet the family values in Indian society.

Thanks & Regards
Murali

Sevalaya accepts contribution through Citibank Cards.

Study Circle Meetings.

Date : 30.1.2004
Speaker : Mr. G.Chittibabu
Book : Saint among men: Abraham Lincoln.
Author : Mr. Abdur rahim
Venue : Admn. Office.

Date : 31.1.2004
Speaker : Ms. L.Anusuya
Book : Choose your goal
Author : Gopi Serfoji
Venue : Service Centre.

Date : 6.2.2004
Speaker : Ms. N.Vidyalakshmi
Book : Anecdotes to generate self-confidence.
Author : Mr. Lena Tamilvanan
Venue : Admn. Office.

Date : 7.2.2004
Speaker : Mr. T.R. Sarathy
Book : For a Prosperous Living
Author : Mr.Arjunan
Venue : Service Centre.

Date : 20.2.2004
Speaker : Mr. N.Ravichandran
Book : How to excel in Public Relations ?
Author : Mr. Lena Tamilvanan
Venue : Admn.Office.

Date : 21.2.2004
Speaker : Ms. R. Latha
Book : Swami Vivekananda
Author : Mathi Oli.

Events :

Sarvodaya Day was observed on 2.2.2004. Mr.R.Ananthachary, I.R.S. (Retired) was the chief-guest. Mr.G.Ram Mohan, who was the principal speaker on that day spoke about the martyrs who gave all that was their's for the sake of freedom of the country. He spoke at length about the contribution of Namakkal. V.Ramalingam, the national poet of the freedom struggle.

On 10.2.2004 Ten of our children were the V.I.P.guests in a tea-Party hosted by his excellency Sri. P.S. Ramamohana Rao, Governor of Tamil Nadu, at the Raj Bhavan. He pleasantly fielded all the questions put in by our enthusiastic young team. The theme of his talk to the children was to forget all differences based on caste and religion; Do not aspire for Government jobs, but think of some way by which you could contribute to the real wealth of the country; Dream Big.

3rd Arts and Science Exhibition.

This year's event which on all possible counts excelled the previous years, was conducted on three days from 27th February to 29th February. Several items which featured the children's innovativeness and a high level of general knowledge and information. Over 800 visitors literally thronged the venue. Dr.Susila Mariappan, Director, Students' Advisory Bureau, University of Madras inaugurated the Exhibition. Dr. C. N. Krishnan, Department of Electronics, Madras Institute of Technology, Anna University, delivered the Valedictory address.



Rajbhavan 10.02.2004

National Service Scheme Camps.

Two Colleges had chosen our campus for the N.S.S camps this month. Kanyaka Parameswari Arts and Science College Camp was between 7.2.2004 and 16.2.2004. Queen Mary's College had their camp from 18.2.2004 to 27.2.2004. Health camps, Cleanliness Awareness campaign, street plays, Temple cleaning, sports, competitions, quiz programmes etc., for our children as well as for the village children, fellowship with our children and the senior citizens, and cultural events were among the activities of the teams.

Reaching out.

Mr.T.S.Venkata ramani, Hony.Co ordinator, was the chief Guest in the Humour Club (Interna-tional), Madras Main Chapter meet on 22.2.2004. The point that Sevalaya brings smiles and laughter in to the lives of hapless children and old people was

appreciated by the audience. Many of them volunteered to extend their support to the organization in whatever possible manner they can.

On 23.2.2004, in the marriage venue of Mr. Ishwar with Ms.Radhika at Chennai, Sevalaya had put up a stall exhibiting their literature and their craft products. This has aroused considerable interest among the wedding-guests.



Science & Arts Exhibition 27, 28, 29th Feb 2004
Prof. C.N.Krishnan



Grandmas & Children



Science & Arts Exhibition 27, 28, 29th Feb - 2004



Science & Arts Exhibition 27, 28, 29th Feb - 2004



Science & Arts Exhibition 27, 28, 29th Feb - 2004

FEARLESSNESS

Every reader of Gita knows, that fearlessness heads the list of Divine Attributes enumerated in the 16th chapter. Whether this is merely due to the exigencies of meter, or whether the pride of place has been deliberately yielded to fearlessness, is more than I can say. In my opinion, however, fearlessness richly deserves the first rank assigned to it. For, it is indispensable for the growth of the other noble qualities. How can one seek truth, or cherish Love, without fearlessness? As Pritam says, 'the Path of Hari (the Lord) is the path of the brave, not cowards. 'Hari here means Truth, and the brave are those armed with fearlessness, not with the sword, the rifle and the like. These are taken up only by those who are possessed by fear.

Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear- fear of disease, bodily injury and death, of dispossession, of losing one's dearest and nearest, of losing reputation or giving offence, and so on. One who overcomes the fear of death does not surmount all other fears as is commonly but erroneously supposed. Some do not fear death, but flee from minor ills of life. Some are ready to die themselves, but cannot bear their loved ones being taken away from them. Some misers will put up with all this, will part even with their lives, but not their property; others will do any number of black deeds in order to uphold their supposed prestige. Some will swerve from the straight and narrow path, which lies clear before them, simply because they are afraid of incurring the world's odium. The seeker after truth must conquer all these fears. He should be ready to sacrifice his all in the quest of truth, even as Harischandra did. The story of Harischandra may be a parable; but every seeker will bear witness to its truth from his personal experience, and therefore that story is as precious as any historical fact.

Perfect fearlessness can be attained only by him who has realized the Supreme, as it implies freedom from delusions. One can always progress towards this goal by determined and constant endeavor, and by cultivating self-confidence.

As I have stated at the very outset, we must give up all external fears. But the internal foes, we must always fear. We are rightly afraid of animal passion, anger and the like. External fears cease of their own accord, when once we have conquered the traitors within the camp. All such fears revolve around the body as the center, and will therefore disappear, as soon as we get rid of attachment for the body. We thus find, that all external fear is the baseless fabric of our own vision. Fear has no place in our hearts, when we have shaken off attachment for wealth, for family and for the body. 'Enjoy the things of the earth by renouncing them' is a noble precept. Wealth, family and body will be there, just the same; we have only to change our attitude towards them. All these are not ours, but God's. Nothing whatever in this world is ours. Even we ourselves are His. Why then should we entertain any fears? The Upanishad therefore directs us 'to give up attachment for things, while we enjoy them.' That is to say we must be interested in them, not as proprietors, but only as trustees. He, on whose behalf we hold them, will give us the strength and weapons requisite for defending them against all usurpers. When we thus cease to be masters, and reduce ourselves to the rank of servants, humbler than the very dust under our feet, all fears will roll away like mists; we shall attain ineffable peace, and see Satyanarayan (the God of Truth) face to face.

--- M.K.Gandhi

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