



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Love 5 Sevalaya's News Letter - March 2011 Serve 12 Price-Re.1

Dear Friends,

The ASER report which was published recently makes us think. This report is on the status of education in rural India. According to this report nearly 99% of children in the school going age are in school, in Tamil Nadu. Yes, this is an achievement, compared to where we were few years ago. The various schemes of Government of Tamil nadu, like the noon meal scheme, free uniforms, free bus passes etc., has resulted in getting the access problem out of the way. We are still missing 1% of the population, this should also be brought under the school system, be it Government school, aided school or private school.

The report also presents many statistics on the quality of education. While we have done well with respect to quantity, there are big holes in the quality of education. According to this report, almost 50% of the children in school do not know how to read and write properly. They are not able to understand what is there in their book. I have personally seen this when children who have completed 8th grade in other schools come to Sevalaya asking for admission to 9th grade. When I ask them to read the Tamil book of 8th grade, they hold the book upside down and keep blinking. It is good that most of the students are in school now, but what are we doing with them?

On the other hand, good quality teachers are very rarely available now. If I compare my teachers who taught me when I was in school, to the present day teachers, the difference is striking. Previous generation didn't have many options for jobs there was no IT boom and no globalization - hence all talent was available to pick up the existing jobs then like Government jobs, bank jobs, private jobs and teaching. Many bright people took up teaching out of choice. Today, there may be a very little percentage who take up teaching out of choice. I have seen some of Sevalaya's good teachers moving out to non-teaching and monotonous jobs, just because they get better pay. In many schools people who cannot get any other job only continue as teachers. This is a big problem, unless we are able to hike the teachers' salaries comparable with corporate salaries. I don't think this is possible in the near future. If that is the case, the quality of education will suffer.

What can be done? Sevalaya is working on this from two angles. The first is to improve the teachers' quality. We make our teachers learn more and acquire more qualification. They continue to be in the student mode. We organize training programs for teachers and also send them out for many training programs. With this we hope the quality of teachers and the quality of education in Sevalaya will improve. The other approach is to invite many volunteers, both from India and abroad, corporate and professionals to come and help our children and teachers. We get many such volunteers during weekdays and many more during weekends. All this adds to learning. We try to make learning more fun, by introducing fun classes play way learning methods etc.

We are open to other schools visiting us and share what we have done. Some schools have come and studied our system in the past. In few more years, ASER report should rate the quality of education in Tamil Nadu also in the range of 99%, along with the quantity being at 100%.

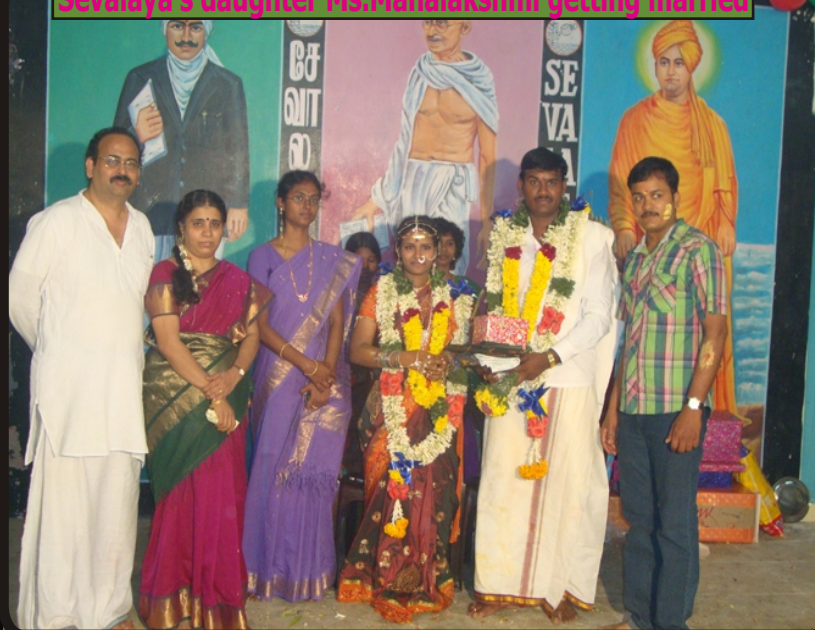
Thanks & Regards

Murali

Justice Mohan presents Bharathi award



Sevalaya's daughter Ms. Mahalakshmi getting married



Swami Vivekananda Jayanthi Celebrations



Public Relations

Mr.V.Muralidharan spoke to the students of Christ College, Thiruvallur district on 09/02/2011, as part of Puthia Thalaimurai program. On 11/02/2011, a team from AXA UK visited the campus.

Mr.V.Muralidharan spoke to the students of Hindu college Pattabiram, social work department, on 17/02/2011.

Mr.V.Muralidharan spoke to students of schools in T.Nagar area on the freedom struggle on 22/02/2011 & 24/02/2011, as part of 3 day program organized by Puthia Thalaimurai foundation.

Sevalaya was presented Bharathi Award for Social Service by Dawn, a Chennai based NGO and Amudhasurabi charitable trust, on 26/02/2011. We received the award at the hands of Mr. S.Mohan, Justice, supreme court, India (Retd.)

Mr. V.Muralidharan and Mr. Kingston were invitees at the dinner hosted by the British Council on the occasion of visit of their country head to Chennai on 22/02/2011.

Sevalaya, on behalf of CIOSA, is coordinating collection of new ideas to improve education in Tamilnadu. These ideas will be presented to the current education minister and also to all the major political parties and impress upon them to add these points in their election manifesto.



Sevalaya is part of an NGO initiative, which is trying to function as a watch dog, to ensure free and fair elections in Tamil Nadu.

Admin & Accounts

Sevalaya's city office at 63/32, I Main Road Gandhi Nagar, Adyar, Chennai 600020 was inaugurated on 13/02/2011 by former Vice Chancellor of Gandhigram University, Dr.D.K. Oza, IAS (Retd.).

Mr.G.Ram Mohan spoke about the importance of "My experiments with truth" on 25/02/2011 at Sevalaya's City office.

Bharathiyar Team

Events

On 30/01/2011, Sevalaya children participated in competitions conducted by Youth Red Cross at Anna University, and won 18 prizes and also won the overall championship, for the second year in a row.

On 05/02/2011, associates from CSR team of M/s Tata Tele Services conducted a training Programme on civic sense and awareness for the students of IX and XII Stds.

MBA students from Velammal College conducted Training on Entrepreneurship for students of IX to XI Stds on 06/02/2011.

A Motivational Programme by Mr. Hari Ananth under the topic "Who is the next Abdul Kalam?" was conducted for students of IX & XI on 12/02/2011 and to the students of VI to XIII on 26/02/2011.

Hall tickets for 12th grade issued in the temple



On 17/02/2011, Personality Development & Career Guidance programme for students of XI Std was conducted by Mr. Sriram Vaidheeswaran of Scope International. Around 50 associates from Scope painted class black boards, planted trees and conducted sports and drawing competitions for the children. It was a full day CSR activity for Scope International.

A workshop on "Employment Opportunities for Rural Students" was organized by Sevalaya in association with Mahindra Pride School on 19/12/2011. 100 students from nearby villages who had completed X and XII and over 18 years of age participated in the workshop. Mr. Sachin More, Deputy Project Coordinator, Mahindra Pride School explained to the students about how their institution provides training to Rural students in Spoken English, Hotel Management, computer Hardware and network etc and also provide employment.

On 21/02/2011, Ethiraj and Mahesh won the Digital Literacy Awards under the Digital Literacy Project of Rotary Club of Madras Midtown at Taj Connemara Hotel, Chennai. Sevalaya got the best digital literacy centre award on the same day.

Swami Vivekananda Jayanthi was celebrated at Sevalaya on 25/02/2011. Swami Gauthamanandaji Maharaj, President, Sri Ramakrishna Mutt, Chennai was the Chief Guest for the occasion. Swami Abiramanandhaji Maharaj, swami Padmasthanandaji Maharaj also participated. Swamiji distributed prizes to the toppers in the Free State Level Examination on the Life and Message of Swami Vivekananda and blessed the students. Vocalist Mr. B.Gururajan from Bangalore accompanied by Mr. Sandeep on Tabla sang devotional songs on the occasion.

NSS Activities

The NSS wing of Sevalaya undertook the cleaning of the campus on 10/02/2011 & 11/02/2011.

Scope international painting the black board



Staff Book Review

"Interesting Incidents in Gandhiji's Life" was taken up for discussion by Ms.V.Priya on 5/2/2011. On the same day Mr.C.Andrews Jesudoss shared his views on "Path shown by Gandhiji". On 12/2/2011, Ms.Maragatham spoke on "Interesting Incidents in Gandhiji's Life" and Mr.Manivannan who shared his views on Social Justice. On 19/2/2011, Ms.Tamilannai spoke on "Gandhiji's Views on Economics." "Path shown by Gandhiji's life History" was taken up for discussion by Mrs.S.Bhavani. On 26/2/2011 Ms. S.Divya spoke on "My Experiments with Truth" written by Gandhiji.

Mr.V.Muralidharan spoke about the book "Pasamulla Puthia Thamaimuraiku" by Dr.R.P.Satyanarayanan, at Gandhi study centre on 23/02/2011.

School Clubs

Ms.G.Jothi spoke on "Understanding Science through Experiments" in the Science club on 24/02/2011. On the same day Ms. Shanthi, Social Science Teacher, Govt. High School, Palavedu, explained about the "Values of Ancient Kings"



Gandhi Team

Events

On 19/02/2011 Sevalaya in association with Puthia Thalaimurai foundation distributed 500 tree saplings for the schools Angel matriculation school, Pakkam Govt. High school, Govt. High School, Melappedu, and St.Claret matriculation Higher Secondary School.

Mobile Library

On 27/02/2011, Sevalaya's Mobile Library visited Puliur and Kaliyanur Kandigai villages

Kottu Murasu:

On 26/02/2011, Sevalaya's Kottumurasu Troup presented a cultural programme in Amandhur village.

Vivekanandar Team:

NSS Camps

NSS students from Soka Ikeda College camped at sevalaya for 5 days from 14/02/2011 to 18/02/2011. They undertook cleaning activities and planted 25 coconut trees in the agricultural field of Sevalaya.

Senior citizens

On 30/01/2011, Mr.M.T.Vedhantham, from Humor club presented a program of Jokes and games to the senior citizens.

The senior citizens were taken on a 4 day tour from 04/02/2011 to 07/02/2011 to temples in Chidambaram, Swamimalai, Thanjavur & Srirangam.



Training

On 05/02/2011 & 08/02/2011 Mr. A. A. Kingston and Mr. S.Anandarajan participated in the training programme conducted by Department of Social Welfare, Thiruvallur Dist on the provisions and implementation procedures of Juvinile Justice Act and Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act.

Student's book review:

On 12/02/2011 Sebastin Santhosh Kumar of 10th std shared his views on Bharathiyar's Essays.

Sevalaya celebrated its daughter Selvi P. Mahalakshmi's wedding with Selvan Raja, son of Pichaimuthu and Veluthai of Aru Road village, Karur District in the traditional manner on 20/02/2011. A large number of donors and well wishers besides the residents of Sevalaya Homes were personally present and blessed the couple.

On 26/02/2011, 20 senior citizens of Sevalaya attended a Classical violin concert by Smt. A.Kanyakumari, organized by Lion's club of Padi Shenoy nagar.

Visit to places of worship

Boys visited Kaliyanurgandigai temple on 04/02/2011, Pakkam sivan temple On, 11/02/2011 and Ramanathapuram Vinayaga temple on 18/02/2011.

On 04/02/2011, 11/02/2011, 18/02/2011 girls visited Vinayaga temple at Kasuva.

On 26/02/2011 all the 12th standard students were taken to Pakkam Sivan temple and after performing poojas, the exam hall tickets were issued.



Gandhiji's Fasts XVII The Rajkot Fast

While the rest of India enjoyed the fruits of Constitutional reforms, the Indian states were denied such benefits. There were mass people's movements in the states including Rajkot. Manibhen Patel led the movement. She along with others was sent to jail. At last, better sense prevailed with the ruler called the Thakore Saheb. He entered in to an agreement with the people represented by Vallabhai Patel. The agreement was that a committee of ten members would be constituted to recommend constitutional reforms. Seven of them will be on the recommendations of Sardar Patel. This was a bold move by the ruler, because he was virtually under the control of the Dewan and the Resident who were British agents. There was over all rejoicing, and Gandhiji openly congratulated the leader.

But the joy was short lived; for, when the actual implementation came, the ruler nominated only three of the seven members recommended by Mr. Patel. His argument was that he was not bound to accept all the recommendations of Mr. Patel, and that he had other interests to accommodate. This was a specious argument and was totally against the letter and spirit of the agreement. It was obvious to everyone that the ruler had played in to the hands of the Dewan and the Resident.

All attempts at a compromise having failed, Gandhiji embarked on a fast on March 3, 1939. Simultaneously, he sent a message to the Viceroy seeking his intervention in the matter. The Viceroy intervened, and the matter was left to the arbitration of the Chief Justice of India Sir Maurice Gwyer.

Sir. Gwyer gave a clear verdict in favor of the people, clearly stating that the agreement was unequivocal that the names recommended by Patel would be included in the committee. Gandhiji broke his fast on March 7.

Of course all did not end well. The Dewan could engineer some groups to protest against Gandhiji. The Dewan Virawalla expressed his sense of hurt that Gandhiji should have sought the intervention of the Viceroy instead of putting trust in him. Gandhiji sensed some justification in his feeling of hurt and made some introspection. He realized that the methodology adopted by him was not in consonance with the spirit of Satyagraha. He summarily renounced the fruits of the award. The following is his statement:

"I recognize the error. My fast was tainted with himsa. I sought immediate intervention of the paramount power, so as to induce the fulfillment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb. This was not the way of ahimsa or conversion. It was the way of himsa or coercion. My fast to be pure should have been addressed only to the Thakore Saheb, and I should have been content to die, if it could not have melted his heart or rather of his adviser Durbar Shri Virawalla. Now that I have renounced the Award, the Muslims and Bhaiyas (who had a grievance) can have anything the Thakore Saheb may be pleased to give them..."

Gandhiji was not infallible. He made a mistake in the application of Satyagraha fasting as conceived by him. This was one of his experiments in the laboratory of Truth, when he learnt a lesson and recorded it for the benefit of posterity...

SPONSORSHIP DETAILS

SPONSORSHIP	CHILDREN HOME		OLD AGE HOME		Other Sponsorship	Contribution(Rs)	Endowments(Rs)
FOOD	Contribution(Rs)	Endowments(Rs)	Contribution(Rs)	Endowments(Rs)			
Milk(One Time)	500	7000	200	3200	Residential Expenses for one Child/one child/one Grandpa/year	6000	80000
Breakfast(one day)	1000	14000	500	7000	Maintenance of One Cow/year	6000	80000
Lunch/Dinner	2000	28000	1000	14000	Education Expenses for one Child/year	6000	80000
Lunch/Dinner with sweet or fruit	2500	35000	1250	20000	Salary for one staff per month	5000	850000
Fullday food Expenses	3500	50000	2000	28000	Funeral Expenses for one Grandpa/one Grandma	5000	70000
Fullday food Expenses with sweet or fruit	5000	70000	3000	42000	Cultural Expenses for one child/one Grandpa/one Grandma	1000	14000
					Medical Expenses for one child/one Grandpa/one Grandma	500	7000
					Camps and Tours, Temple Visit for one child/one Grandpa/one Grandma	500	7000
					Sports Expenses for one child per year	500	7000
					Educational Aids	1000	14000
					Educational Kits	1000	14000
					Higher Education	20000	300000
					Professional Higher Education	50000	700000
					Workshop/Training/for one Staff	2000	28000



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Editor: T.S.Venkataramani

Send your comments to: Sevalaya, 63/32 I Main Road, Gandhinagar, Adyar,Chennai 600020 Tamil Nadu, India.
Phone Nos : 9003102149, 9841562308, 94446 20289, (044) 24419009
E.mail : sevalayamurali@gmail.com, sevalaya2@gmail.com Visit us at: www.sevalaya.org

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