



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Love 2 **Sevalaya's News Letter - November 2007** Serve 8 Price-Re.1

Dear Friends,

In south India, traditional welcome is given to important persons, by playing Nadaswaram. As the bridegroom is considered the most important person in any wedding, nadaswaram is played to welcome him and his party. Same concept is followed in temple functions when we welcome God. But all this costs money. Now-a-days we don't have too many nadaswaram vidvans or experts, so the demand goes up. Hence in many functions, people play the nadaswaram tapes or CDs. But how can we replace the original music and the very sight of three or four people playing nadaswarams and thavil, etc., in itself gives a grand look to any function.

At Sevalaya, every year the annual function is a grand occasion and like any other 'function organizers' we also wanted to get nadaswarams arranged. But we are always conscious of cost. So we don't want to spend money on this! We are also not satisfied with playing tapes. Then what to do? Help came on its own.

One of the local nadaswaram vidvans, came to us on his own and offered free service for Sevalaya. He is from a poor background and basically a barber by profession, but learnt playing nadaswaram out of his own interest. As he is an Ayyappa devotee, he came to Sevalaya a few years ago, before he started his trip to Sabarimala and donated one bag of rice and also sponsored food for the children and grand pas and grandmas. On that visit he told us that every year he will come and play nadaswaram free of cost on Sevalaya's annual day function. From then on he has been coming every year, once before his sabarimala trip to do the 'annadanam' and then once on the annual

day to do 'nadadanam'. We just have to pay for his expenses to transport the musical instruments, there is no other fee. He says "when Sevalaya does so much service to the poor, what I can do, I want to contribute. Let me also get part of the punniya". He was there, couple of hours before the function started on 15th Oct and was keeping the crowd fully engaged till the Education minister arrived.

One more major expense for any function is the mike and light arrangements. Mr.Ramesh, who is doing this business in the village, said that he will take part in the service of Sevalaya by offering his services free on the annual day. The entire Sevalaya campus was lit up for the occasion and mikes were arranged – speakers were placed so that the 2000 strong audience can see and listen to the chief guests. Mr.Ramesh, as he is doing the business only in the villages near by, is not very well off. We had to meet only the cost of the lights and mike hire charges – he willingly said 'no' to any profit for himself on this occasion.

There were 'rangolies' and 'thoranams' in front of each house in the village on that day. The villagers feel in their heart that it is a function in their house and they have to participate, actively. Such participation from poor people from the villages, is a major strength of Sevalaya. These are uneducated, poor villagers. Their behavior is a lesson for many educated, rich, highly placed people, who just ignore the plight of poor people or want to do service to satisfy their egos.

Thanks & Regards
Murali



Mr. V.Muralidharan, Founder and Managing Trustee of Sevalaya received Exnora Seva Ratna Award 2007

Events

The Tamil Nadu Film Society screened a film ("Palaiya Methai") for Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Hr. Sec. students on 05/10/2007

Sevalaya celebrated Gandhi Jayanthi, World Elders Day and the day of International Peace fittingly on 2nd October 2007. Prizes were awarded to the top rankers in the State Level free Open Book examination on Gandhiji's Life conducted by Sevalaya in which about 25000 students from 130 schools participated. Certificates were issued to the participants. The senior citizens of Sevalaya's Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa free Old Age Home for the destitute poor presented a cultural programme.

In keeping with the spirit of the International Day of Non-violence a devout Gandhian admirer from Boston, Mr. Ron Radice M/s STT, USA was the Chief Guest for the function. In his speech he appreciated the way Sevalaya is working in a sustained way on the lines of constructive programme of action enunciated by Mahatma Gandhiji, particularly in the field of education. He averred that in the situation the world finds itself today particularly in the context of Terrorism and dwindling ecological resources, there is no alternative to Gandhian approach of Truth, non-violence for sustained development and alternative technology. On 07/10/2007 & 21/10/2007 Mr. Amuthan Meganathan, introduced by Thiruvallur Jain Sangh conducted a session on "Computer Animation for XI std. students.

Mr. J. Murali Krishnan, Advisor of Sevalaya conducted



Mr. K.Jalaludeen, Joint Secretary, Islamic Foundation Trust at Ramzan Celebrations



Mr. Ron Radice, M/s STT, USA at Gandhi Jayanthi Celebrations

a session on "Spoken English" for the staff on 07/10/2007.

Mr. Muthiah Ramanathan, Director, Mind Dynamics Centre and Advisor, Sevalaya conducted a motivational Programme for Slow Learners on 07/10/2007.

Sevalaya's 19th Annual Day Celebrations were held on 15/10/2007. Mr. V.Muralidharan, Founder and Managing Trustee of Sevalaya received Exnora Seva Ratna Award 2007 from the Honourable Minister for School Education, Govt of Tamil Nadu Mr Thangam Thennarasu, who was the Chief Guest for the occasion. The Minister also presented an award to Mr. G.Chittibabu, Headmaster of Sevalaya's mahakavi Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School for his dedicated service for over 10 years. Sevalaya's 19th Annual Report was released by the Minister and the first copy was received by Mr.E.A.P.Sivaji (MLA, Thiruvallur). Mrs.Sulochana Ramaseshan (President, Exnora International), Mr.M.B.Nirmal (Founder, Exnora International), Mr.V.S.Shanmugam (Chairman, Thiruvallur Union) Ms. C.Vijayalakshmi, CEO, Thiruvallur and Ms. Uma, CEO, SSA were the dignitaries who graced the occasion.

Mr.R.S.Rajaraman (District Councillor Thiruvallur), Mr.J.Viswanathan (President Town Panchayat, Thiruninravur), Mr.Jayapugazhenthir (District Councillor Thiruvallur), Mr.N.Neethinathan (Exnora International), Mr.V.R.Rajan (Executive Secretary, Tamil Nadu Federation of Voluntary Agencies) and Mr.Jayaveeran (Editor, Amaithipadai) felicitated the organisation for the services being rendered in an exceptional manner



Mr. S.Dhanasekaran, A.E.E.O. at Ayutha Pooja & Saraswathi Pooja Celebrations

contributing to the all round development in the life of the economically weaker rural people.

Ramzan was celebrated at Sevalaya on 20/10/2007. In a function organized for the occasion, Mr. K.Jalaludeen, Joint Secretary, Islamic Foundation Trust, Chennai was the chief guest. Mr.K.Jalaludeen said that according to Islam Man was born to perform 3 duties – Duty to God, Duty to fellow men and Duty to oneself. The aim of all this is to promote self control and discipline and service to humanity based on Universal Love. The fasting during the Ramzan month aims to promote these basic essential qualities in man he mentioned.

Ayutha Pooja & Saraswathi Pooja was celebrated in the traditional way on 20/10/2007 at 3.30 pm. Mr. S.Dhanasekaran, Asst, Elementary Educational Officer, Ikkadu, Thiruvallur was the chief guest. As a part of the Saraswathi Pooja celebrations Old age home inmate Mrs. Sundari presented a carnatic music concert rendering Bharathiar songs. She selected patriotic and devotional songs of the great poet. The songs on Saraswathi were very much appreciated by the audience, which included the residents of the Children's Home and Old Age Home and the local villagers.

A Session on "Maths. Magic" was conducted by Mr. J.Krishnan, Rtd. Joint General Manager, OCF, Avadi for X to XII std. students on 24/10/2007.

"Thithikkum Thiruvagam" a lecture on Thiruvagam, a collection of hymns by the Saivaites Saint Manickavasagar was delivered by Dr. K.V.Raj Ganesh, Head Of the Tamil Department of D.S.Narayana Swamy College, Navalur on 27/10/2007.

External Events

Sevalaya Children participated in the morning Prayer session near Gandhi Statue at Marina Beach on Gandhi Jayanthi on 02/10/2007 and sang Bhajans. They garlanded the statue of the Mahatma.

On 11/10/2007 the residents of the Old Age Home participated in "World Elders Day" Function at Thiruvallur. arranged by District Social Welfare Dept., Thiruvallur.

On 21/10/2007 Sevalaya students participated in "Ayutha Pooja Celebrations" conducted by Pattabiram Anna Nagar Auto Drivers Association.

Seva Craft Fair-2007 – a one day display cum sale of craft products of Sevalaya was held at the auditorium of Abhishek Apartments in Thiruvannamiyur on 28/10/2007. There was a video presentation on the activities of Sevalaya also.

The residents of the Old Age Home participated in a Get together Programme for senior citizens organised by Nirjara Vidya at Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan Mini Hall on 28/10/2007.

Sevalaya School participated in the Science Exhibition organised by Education Department, Thiruvallur and won first prize in the IX and X Category in the Avadi Zone.

Club Activities

The Tamil Club met on 4/10/2007, 10/10/2007 and 13/10/2007. There was a discussion on poems of Mahakavi Bharathiyar.

The English Club met on 04/10/2007 and 11/10/2007 – The poem of Walt Whitman, the great American poet about Abraham Lincoln's efforts to abolish slavery - was read out and explained to the students.

The Social Science Club Celebrated the "World Ahimsha Day" on 03/10/2007. On 10/10/2007, there was a lecture on Historical Places in Tamilnadu. The book "Ancient Monuments" (Tamil) by Mr.J.Lakshmanan was discussed on 17/10/2007.

NSS

As a part of the NSS activity 09/10/2007 – 150 Tree saplings were planted at Shiva Temple at Pakkam Panchayat plantation. 5000 tree saplings donated by CSR group of Club Mahindra were distributed to the Panchayat unions in and around Sevalaya.

Sports

The Senior & Super Senior Boys Teams were the winners in the Thiruvallur District Level Hand Ball match. Boys – Senior Team were the Winners and the Super Senior were Runners up in the Thiruvallur District Level Table Tennis match. The events were conducted on 11/10/2007.

Training Programmes

by Mr.Muthiah Ramanathan, Director, Mind Dynamics Centre conducted a session on "Being an Effective Teacher" on 28/10/2007.

Staff Study Circle

On 06/10/2007 J.Lakshmanan spoke on V Chapter of Bhagavad Gita. Mr. R.Sakthivel Murugan spoke on VIII&IX Chapters of The Holy Quran on 13/10/2007. The Bible (Philippians) was Mr.J.Selvanayagam's choice for discussion on 20/10/2007. Mr. P.Sounderrajan shared about what he read on the VI Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita on 27/10/2007.

Students Study Circle

06/10/2007- D.Silambarasan spoke about the book "Achievements of Tamil Sportsmen in the World Sports Arena" (Tamil) by Mr. E.Ganesan. "How to Develop Thinking Capacity" (Tamil) by Lena Tamilvanan was the book discussed by A.Sangeetha in the meeting on 13/10/2007. On 20/10/2007 R.Lagesh shared about what he read in the book "Personality Development" (Tamil) by Henry Hotson. "How to save time?" by Jayakanthan was Chitra's choice for discussion on 27/10/2007.

Visit to Places of Worship

On 05/10/2007 the girls visited the Vinayagar Temple at Ramanathapuram and the boys visited the temple on 12/10/2007. On 19/10/2007 the boys visited the RC Church at Thiruninravur and on 26/10/2007 the girls visited the Mosque at Melapedu.

On 11/10/2007 the residents of the Old Age Home were taken to Veera Ragava Swami Temple at Thiruvallur.

Ammakannu and the Ambrosia

Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiyar has written thus about domestic servants in a lighter vein in his "Kannan, the Servant"

"Forgetting every generous bonus
They still pile up demands on us.
When work is heaviest, on that day,
Quiet, at home, they stay away.
"Why were you absent yesterday?"
We ask; and we are answered duly:
"A scorpion in a pot, Sir, truly
Bit me with its teeth most cruelly!
My good wife, Sir, the best of women,
Was sore possessed by an evil demon!
It was the twelfth day ceremony
After the death of my poor granny!"

Such disobedience, and lies in dozens;
Such whispering in corners with our dear cousins!
Our Inner Chamber's small disgraces
Loud they proclaim in public places.
They tell the world with drum beats-yes, ah me!
If we run somewhat short of sesame." (Tr: K.S.).

But in real life, Bharathiyar had some very good and loyal servants, one of whom was Ammakannu. Ammakannu was a very poor old woman, ugly in outward countenance, illiterate and ignorant. She obviously could not be aware of Bharathiyar's poetic genius or patriotic fervour. Yet, by some inexplicable inner magic, she was drawn to the bard, as a disciple to a Guru or a devotee to the Lord. Bharathiyar too, in turn was inextricably bound by her affection. An incident concerning Bharathiyar and Ammakannu, as narrated by biographer, Va.Raa.

Some time in 1917. Due to a trivial, unpleasant family episode, Bharathiyar left home in a huff.

Ammakannu and all family friends were combing the entire town of Puduchery and could not trace him. At last, Bharathidasan was lucky to find him in the railway station, assuaged his feelings to a certain extent and persuaded him to return. Bharathiyar agreed, but refused to go back home. It was decided to accommodate him in Bharathidasan's house. So, the push cart was directed that way. On the way was standing poor Ammakannu with a basketful of delicious dishes. She had known that Bharathiyar had not taken anything since morning, and was ready with dishes to serve him immediately on sighting him. Bharathiyar's mood was totally changed. Both the bard and his disciple, Dasan, ate to heart's content." Ambrosia!" (devamrutham) exclaimed Bharathidasan. Bharathiyar caught in to the poetic mood and commanded the Push cart Walla to take the cart home. "Take the Chariot!" he commanded in a tone befitting an emperor.

This Ammakannu, he has honoured, by captioning a poem after her name (Ammakannu Pattu) Incidentally let us enjoy the poem in English Translation by T.N.Ramachandran.

The lock is opened by the hand
And the good mind by the intellect;
It is tune that opens the song
And women the home of delight.

The leaf is cleaned by the hand
And the mansion of mind by truth;
The beast is captured with the bow
And the fortress of love with words.

It is mind that controls the breath,
It is action that guards the body,
It is mouth that consumes the food
It is mother that strengthens life.

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.
E.mail : sevalaya@vsnl.com visit at: www.sevalaya.org