



# LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Love 4 **Sevalaya's News Letter - October 2009** Serve 7 Price-Re.1

Dear Friends,

In the last month's newsletter we had made an appeal to Koteswara Rao of T.Nagar to come and pick up his son from Sevalaya. Finally Koteswara Rao arrived on 7<sup>th</sup> of Sept, but from Anakapalli, near Visakapattinam in Andhra Pradesh! Let me describe what happened after Master Sai reached Sevalaya on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

The staff of Sevalaya with their genuine care and concern established an emotional rapport with the child that encouraged him to share information about his family members and dwelling place. The boy belongs to a family of five. He has one elder brother and one elder sister, his father is a daily wages worker in a tea stall and mother a domestic worker. Venkat Sai is the youngest in his family. The playful habit of Sai changed his own life into a muddle when he was playing in a train which was halting in the station near his house at Anakapalli town in Vishakapattinam. The train unfortunately started and the child was helpless about the uncertainty he encountered in a few minutes. He reached Patna and later he was rescued by Patna police and handed over to Apna Ghar, a home run by Government of Patna. I met Sai alias Venkata Sai in Apna Ghar on 26<sup>th</sup> August and brought him to Sevalaya. The Sevalaya staff were able to correlate the information gathered by interacting with him in his mother tongue Telegu. The puzzle for reuniting was solved when he clarified as Sri Nagar as his dwelling place, instead of T.Nagar. Using Google earth software, Sevalaya staff located the area from where Sai comes from. The staff immediately contacted the Anakapalli police station as the boy was very specific about the place and enquired of any complaint reported about missing child in the police station. The police personnel immediately responded and traced the report and informed positively to Sevalaya. The Anakapalli police personnel and Venkat Sai's father reached Sevalaya on 07.09.09 for confirmation.

The father was excited and speechless to see his son Venkat Sai in Sevalaya after a gap of 6 months. The parents have registered a case about missing child Venkat Sai at Anakapalli police station after a month of his disappearance with a hope to see him again. The child was handed over to his father on 08.09.09 at 11 am in the presence of Mr. Baskaran Uttukkottai DSP. Thiruvallur District and Mr. M.R.S.Prabhakaran – Inspector Vengal Station, Thiruvallur District along with press and media in the Sevalaya campus.

"I will definitely visit Sevalaya with my family in next few months and express my thanks and gratitude for the concern and care taken to reunite our son" Expressed by Venkat Sai's father in his mother tongue Telugu.

Sevalaya appreciates the sincere effort taken by each and every one - My Friend Mr.Savithiri Kannan who first brought to my notice the Junior Vikatan article, Junior Vikatan and Vijay TV the media for getting the attention of public in this case, Ms.Malarvizhi, IPS, AIG, Patna Police, Mr. Senthil Kumar IAS, the Patna commissioner, Mr.Saravanakumar IAS, Director Animal Husbandry in Patna Government, Mr. Vinit Vinayak, IPS, SSP Patna, Police officials of all the three states, Bihar, Andhra and Tamil Nadu and the Child Welfare Committees of Patna and Thiruvallur. We also place on record the help rendered by Mr.Shaffi Munna, the Junior Vikatan reporter, without whose help and guidance, this reunion could not have taken place.

Thanks & Regards  
Murali



## Bharathiyar Team

### Events

District level Interschool Oratorical, Poetry, Essay and Quiz competitions on the lives of Mahatma Gandhi, Mahakavi Bharathiyar and Swami Vivekananda were conducted on 03/09/2009. 300 students from 19 Schools in and around Thiruvallur and Chennai participated in this competition. Prizes were distributed to the winners of these competitions on 11/09/2009 which was celebrated as Gandhi, Bharathi, Vivekananda Day as September 11<sup>th</sup> has a special significance in the lives of these three Great Leaders. It was on a September 11 that the word Satyagraha was coined in South Africa, Swami Vivekananda addressed the World Parliament of Religions and Bharathi shed his mortal body to permeate the entire universe. Teachers Day was also celebrated on the occasion.. Mr. Bhaskaran, Dy. Superintendent of Police, Uthukkottai and Mr. Lucas –Environmentalist – Auroville were the Chief Guests. Mementoes were presented to the staff of Sevalaya.

On 12/09/2009, Mr. V.Muralidharan was presented an Award for propagating the works of Mahakavi Bharathiyar by Bharathiyar Sangham which is a 60 year old Association.

Sevalaya Student S.Punitha – 5<sup>th</sup> Std won the third prize in the Bhagavad Gita recital Competition conducted by Chinmaya Mission on 13/09/2009.

Sevalaya children participated in the Live Kolu organized by Exnora International at Marina Beach on 16/09/2009. The children dressed up as mythological characters and as national leaders and held Placards creating awareness on the need to protect the environment for a better future.

### Staff Book Review

On 05/09/2009, Mr.Nedunchezhiyan spoke on Vivekananda's "Karma Yoga". Swami Vivekananda's "Yoga and its uses" was taken up for discussion by Ms.Mariammal on 12/09/2009. On 19/09/2009 Mr.Selvam shared his views on Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsar "Amutha Mozhigal". Ms.Sumathi shared her views on Vivekananda's "Personality Development" on 26/09/2009.

### Puzhal Prison -II

The Valedictory function of the 30n session course on Gandhiji, Bharathiyar and Vivekananda at Puzhal Prison II was held on 07/09/2009. Dr.K.R.Shyamsundar I.P.S (Director General of Prisons, Tamilnadu) was the chief guest and distributed Collection of Bharathiyar Poems presented by Sevalaya to the residents.

### Training Programme

7 staff members attended the Personality development programme at the Vedathri Maharishi Ashram at Aliyar, Coimbatore district.

On 12/09/2009 Mr.Shankar conducted a Training session to Sevalaya Teaching staff on "Making Classrooms Interesting and Interactive".

Mr.A.Annamali –Advisor of Sevalaya delivered a speech on “Non- Violent Disciplining” on 26<sup>th</sup> September at Sevalaya Campus for the teaching staffs of Mahakavi Bharathiyar School.

### **Sports**

On 08/09/2009 Sevalaya conducted District level throw ball meet at Sevalaya Campus Kasuva. Sevalaya Team won the 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize in the event.

On 09/09/2009 in the Poonamalle Zonal level Volley Ball Tournament, in the junior category Sevalaya team were the winners.

Puliyur Panchayat conducted Rural Sports Event in connection with Anna Centenary Celebrations on 16/09/2009. Sevalaya Students Srinivasan and Govindarajan were the winners in Carrom and Srinivasan was the winner in Chess. Ramakrishnan of Sevalaya came first in the Long Jump and High Jump. Shobana and Arunakumari won the tennikoit match. In the 100 Mts running race for Boys Deepak came first and in the event for Girls Baby came first. It is a great honor that Sevalaya’s Physical education teacher, Mr.K.Shanmugam was requested to co-ordinate the whole event.

### **Club Activities**

On 03/09/2009, Ms.Sumathi explained Ratio & Proportion to Maths Club students. In the Social Science Club Meet on the same day journalist Mr.Savithiri Kannan explained about the Origin and Development of humans.

### **NSS Activities**

The NSS wing of Sevalaya undertook the cleaning of the Sevalaya Campus on 10/09/2009.

### **Gandhi Team**

Sevalaya’s Kottu Murasu Team presented a programme on Importance of Education at Melakondaiyar Village on 11/09/2009.

Mr.V.Muralidharan –Founder and Managing Trustee of Sevalaya was the Chief Guest for the “State and central Pensioners Association Annual Day” at Korattur on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

Mr.V.Muralidharan –Founder and Trustee of Sevalaya was the Chief Guest for the “NGO –Workshop” organized by TAFVA on 22<sup>nd</sup> in Chennai.

### **Vivekanandar Team**

#### **Visit to Places of Worship**

On 04/09/2009 hostel boys went to Ramanathapuram Vinayagar Temple and on the same day age home Grandpas and Grandmas went to Kakkalur Anjenaya Temple. On 11/09/2009 hostel boys went to Thiruninravur Church and hostel girls Ramanathapuram Vinayagar temple.

#### **Students Study Circle**

On 12/08/2009 “Scientists who changed the world” (Tamil) by Mr.Govindasamy was reviewed by Saravanan.



## WHAT MADE HIM A LEADER?

Gandhiji's famous quote "Be the change you wish to see in the world" is displayed prominently at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. We read this interesting bit of information in a book "In search of leadership" by Phil Harkins, CEO of Linkage Inc and Phil Swift Director of ARC Financial Corp. The book is a documentation of the research conducted by them by interviewing 50 leaders in a wide array of fields across the globe. The Subject of the research is "Why Lead?" that is to say what made people take up leadership? Gandhiji was one of the leaders interviewed and his purpose according to them was "because it was right". They have traced major events of Gandhiji's life and have good observations to make about his extraordinary accomplishment in leading a movement that brought freedom to one-fifth of the people of the world with no power than his own moral authority

The exercise of the authors is purposeful, interesting and well meaning. But Gandhiji could not be cast into their mould. Gandhiji did not become a leader by choice. Then the appropriate question would be what made Gandhiji a leader?

Was it the insult inflicted on him at Petermaritzberg, when a railway inspector threw him out of a carriage on cold , dead night? Even at that young a age he had no sense of personal ego and was determined that he would not take it out or seek legal remedy for any personal cause . Be it when a Pathan inflicted bleeding injuries, an English official hit him badly for walking in a footpath reserved for whites (although Gandhiji had permit) or at the leaders of a mob who harassed and humiliated him on his second arrival at South Africa. Then what aroused him to action was his revolt at the injustice suffered silently by the Indian community at the hands of the racially prejudiced Englishmen.

De facto leadership mantle fell on him during his farewell party in South Africa when he was departing to India after completing his assignment with Dada Abdullah. There was a small column in a newspaper which presented an innocuous item about some restrictions on the Indian community. Others in the gathering had seen it but had not realised its implications. Gandhi could see the far reaching consequences of the move and explained them. The gathering understood the importance and urgency for a movement against the injustice. But who will lead? Who else other than Gandhiji? But with his assignment over what would be his wherewithal to extend his stay till the fight lasted. It was awkward that he would draw a salary from the funds of the movement. With his due sense of propriety, he refused saying that a social worker voluntarily taking up and working for a cause should not draw any remuneration. Then it was decided that any legal work of the people in the community would be entrusted to him.

It was the same sense of propriety that made him create a trust with all the gold jewellery and worthy gifts presented to him for his service. Even the gold ornaments presented to Kasturba was taken to the trust, despite her protests.

Gandhiji was a good planner and a strategist. No doubt as evidenced by Champaran Satyagraha and later the epic salt march. But he would not compromise on truth in the name of diplomacy or strategy. For him, right means was as important as right ends.

While the civil disobedience in South Africa was in full swing and it was almost sure that success was near at hand, a fortuitous event happened. British railway workers went on a strike and it was the right moment for the Satyagrahis to hit the government and snatch victory. But to the surprise of all Gandhiji withdrew his agitation stating that he did not wish to capitalize on the difficulty of the opponent. The victory of a movement should be won out of the justice of the cause, not conceded out of any difficulty.

Of course all of us know the Chauri Chaura incident. The workers all over the nation were charged with excellent spirit and the movement was about to end in victory. But in Chauri Chaura, some police officials were burnt alive by an angry mob. Gandhiji admitted that the country was not prepared for a non-violent agitation and called it off much to the annoyance of the other leaders. As a consequence, Gandhiji was arrested and there were no protests in the country with due deference to his appeal. This made the viceroy gloat "Gandhiji is a spent force, not a dog barked on his arrest"

These are a few glimpses on the question what made Gandhiji a leader. This could well be the subject of deeper study but the answer is inevitable – "HIS COMMITMENT TO TRUTH AND JUSTICE"

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