

Associates of Fiat Chrysler sponsor feeding 2576 hungry families



Associates of leading automotive company Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), through their voluntary contribution of ₹ 35 lacs, have supported 2576 families from 50 villages in Thiruvallur, Kanchipuram and Chengalpet District and in Chennai City during COVID-19 crisis.

The distribution of relief materials in 4 districts were completed in 5 days from 12th May 2020 to 16th May 2020.

Grocery Kits worth ₹ 1,500 each were distributed to each family. The kit included 10 Kgs of rice, 1 Kg Toor Dhall, 1 Kg Gram Dhall and 1 Kg Urad Dhall, 1 litre cooking oil, 1 Kg salt, toothpaste, 2 Nos washing soap and 2 Nos bath soap. The beneficiaries included daily wage laborers, transgenders, visually

We, 30 members of transgender community in this area were running our lives by seeking donations from shops. But now since all shops are closed due to lockdown, we had no option but to wait for support for food and essentials. We thank FCA and Sevalaya for identifying us and providing essential provision items for our living"

Sathyasreesharmila, Transgender, Pukkudurai, Chengalpet District

challenged people, physically challenged people and members of Irula community.

FCA sponsored the donation of 3 Ventilators and 100 PPE kits worth ₹ 30 lacs to Thiruvallur GH. The ventilators and PPE kits were handed over to the District Collector Maheswari Ravikumar IAS.

Praveen Dev, AGM, FCA and Ashish Sharma with their team joined hands with Sevalaya team in distributing the kits to the beneficiaries.

Thiruvallur District Collector Maheswari Ravikumar, IAS, Chengalpet District Collector John Louis IAS and Kanchipuram District Revenue Officer G R Divyashree, participated in the event in their respective districts.

On behalf of FCA, I wish to thank you for the efficient and flawless support in execution of the food kits distribution for 2576 families and for ensuring the timely delivery of medical equipment to the Thiruvallur Govt hospital.

Considering the sheer magnitude of the task at hand and also with the associated challenges of operating during the Covid lockdown period, it is indeed a very significant achievement to complete the full distribution of the

BNY Mellon and employees feed 500 for 31 days



Associates of BNY Mellon contributed ₹ 10 lacs and the company matched that generosity with a matching contribution of ₹ 10 lacs to sponsor the breakfast, lunch and dinner every day for 31 days for daily wage earners living in 3 villages - Kavanur, Kasavamedu and Puliyur Kandigai in Thiruvallur District.

The food was prepared in a community kitchen set up in Kavanur village and packed.

The packed food was then distributed to 500 people in the 3 villages by Sevalaya staff from 1st May 2020 to 31st May 2020.

food kits along with delivery of the medical equipment within 5 days. Right from the steps of identifying the needy beneficiaries to coordinating with the local authorities and ensuring the distribution through allocated distribution spots with social distancing was indeed remarkable. Overall it was a very good example of professionalism in the social work field.

Praveen Dev, AGM, FCA

Joy of giving: the way of life

Dear Friends,

Last two months experience in corona relief has made few things clear. First point is, that there are lots of people ready to help. Sevalaya got support from many corporates, many individuals and as of today, we have done relief work worth more than ₹ 1.5 crores. (around 200,000 USD). Also many corporate volunteers joined Sevalaya team in carrying out the relief activity. Many Sevalaya staff jumped into action to help people in distress, at their own personal risk. Staff kept calling all our donors to explain about the work we do and requested for support.

Many staff, who were working from home, came to Kasuva campus to take charge of kitchen and gaushala and agriculture to relieve the regular staff. Teachers and other senior staff cooked, cleaned, washed vessels, gave bath to cows, and got their hands dirty in agricultural fields. Many staff worked continuously without a break for two months. Students at community colleges stitched cloth masks to be distributed free to front line workers like police and sanitary workers. All were rising to the occasion to play their role.

We went to many poor villages and slums in Chennai, Thiruvallur, Kanchipuram, Chengalpet, Trichy and Thanjavur to distribute food, provisions. We also

met government officials to handover ventilators, PPE kits, sanitizers and masks. In many places I found that the need was permanent, corona or no corona. Many with small huts, they will have problem for food every day. I met many old people. We were handing over 10 Kgs of rice and another 10 Kgs of other provisions. We could clearly see that these senior citizens will not be able to carry 20 kgs to their huts and so our volunteers helped them. I stopped some of them and asked why his sons or daughters have not come to help. There was an empty smile and they said "No one is with us. We manage on our own".

They survive on whatever ration they get from government and some of them get support money from government. But that will not be sufficient for the whole month. We met many transgenders, gypsies, snake catchers, fortune tellers – all such people have no job even during normal times.



They roam around in the market areas and ask for money from all passersby. Due to lock down, many are not coming out, so no opportunity to collect any money.

Migrant workers have lost their jobs. They left their families and came thousands of miles away only to make a living. Now that is gone, they just want to go back. But there is no transport available and there is police guarding all state boundaries. They are so desperate that they are trying to cover the distance by foot. They get beaten up by police at the state borders. There are many accidents and deaths on the way. But they keep going. It breaks our heart to see many women walking like that carrying their children.

We have tried to serve as many as possible with the resources we got. But we keep getting calls from all over the country asking for help. Yes, we have a large number of donors who are helping us, but a larger number of people are in distress. The gap seems to get wider as we go into villages and meet people. We need more help.

Thanks and Regards

Sevalaya Murali

Lalgudi Jayaraman's kin feed 200 labourers



Lalgudi G J R Krishnan and Lagudi Vijayalakshmi

Well-wishers and family members of Padma Bhushan Awardee Lalgudi Jayaraman, have in memory of the legendary violin maestro, have contributed ₹ 1.5 lacs to sponsor breakfast for 200 daily wage labourers in Ponnaiammanmedu village in

Thiruvallur District.

They had also sponsored groceries kits worth ₹ 3.5 lakhs to 200 differently abled people in Thanjavur District, families of 300 daily wage labourers in Lalgudi and to families of 26 children studying in Panchayat Union Primary School in Aangarai village, Lalgudi.

I came to know about Sevalaya through my friend Usha Bharadwaj. I run a Trust called Krutagnya and I wanted to perform a short concert with my students in one such organisation for the underprivileged children and seniors.

I was very happy when Sevalaya made this possible for me last summer in July 2019. I visited their campus in Thiruninravur with two of my students, and performed a short concert for their children. It was a heart warming

Sevalaya was the implementation partner in all these initiatives, coordinating and identifying beneficiaries, procurement of kits and arranging the distribution event with adequate precautions like wearing of masks and maintaining social distance.

experience to interact with them. During Covid 19, I came to know of Sevalaya's various initiatives.

We (Anna and I) were happy to reach out on facebook, interact with the followers by going live and playing for them and to campaign for the fund raiser for Sevalaya. We are thankful that we could do our modest bit with everybody's support.

Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi, Daughter of Lalgudi G Jayaraman

Sevalaya centres take on Covid challenge

Thanjavur



242 rice bags and grocery kits worth ₹ 300 each comprising of Toor Dhall, tamarind, sugar, cooking oil, salt were provided to the underprivileged in Thanjavur District in coordination with Panchayat Union Elementary Schools in Vadapathi, Sooliyankottai, Thirukoilpathu, and Andinatham.

Lalgudi

On 12th May 2020, rice bags and grocery kits sponsored by many individual donors and teachers of Panchayat Union Middle school, Agalankanallur Pudutheru, Lalgudi taluk, Trichy District were distributed to families of 110 children studying in the school.

The relief operations in Lalgudi were coordinated by K Muthuramakrishnan, Advisor, Sevalaya.



Ravanasamudram



At the Sevalaya's community college in Ravanasamudram, Tenkasi District, 4 volunteers led by the tailoring instructor S Anandhi and Computer Instructor Valli Karthika stitched 800 facemasks.

The masks were distributed to the Government hospitals in Kadayan, Alwarkurichi and Ravanasamudram, Panchayat Office and Sub Registrar's office in Ravanasamudram and to the Police personnel.

Mambakkam

Sevalaya's Women Entrepreneurs Group members at the Mambakkam centre took on the task of stitching cloth masks, for the fellow villagers and Police personnel of Sriperumbudur.

1020 masks were stitched in just 5 days with 4 members. 120 masks were donated to the Mambakkam Villagers, 250 masks to Karthikeyan IPS, ASP of Sriperumbudur for the Police personnel and 650 masks to the villagers in and around Sevalaya's Kasuva centre.

Vadanallur

Ever since the Covid 19 lockdown was announced, Sevalaya's Vadanallur Mobile Medical Van (MMV) team consisting of medical camp coordinator Abdul Nazeer and nursing assistants T Radhika and R Padmavathi educated the villagers about the precautions to be taken, hand washing techniques and the importance of wearing masks and social distancing at the Uthiramerur Government Hospital.



Online classes without laptops



The unexpected lockdown saw the busy school life of students and teachers coming to a sudden, screeching halt right in the middle of board exams. It left everyone stunned for some time but soon discussions were initiated on ways to meet the challenges.

Sevalaya could not switch to online classes as many elite schools all over the country did with ease. How many Sevalaya students have laptops and desktops at home? They are from underprivileged sections of the society. Superceding even their education was worries their teachers had about how the families were managing financially. The teaching staff started off by calling up their students.

Teachers found out that 70% of the parents had smart phones and so each teacher created a WhatsApp group for their class. Worksheets were prepared and sent on a daily basis. Students completed the same and sent them back to the teachers. With the lockdown still continuing, this is on.

Students are also encouraged to explore their talents in singing, dancing, sloka recitation and oratory by recording and sending them to their teachers.

Some teachers have given topics for drawing and conducted competitions. Prizes will be given to the children when they are able to return to their classes.

Teachers at Sevalaya are keeping their

wards active and motivated in this difficult period using the limited means at hand.

Std X students are given daily worksheets to help them prepare for the board exams. Some of the primary students miss their teachers and feel happy to hear their teachers' voice over phone. Teachers are thus in constant touch with their students ensuring their safety and morale.

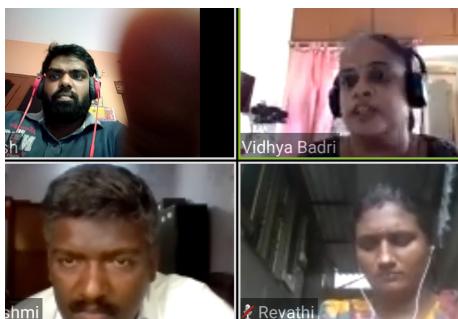
14 students from Std VI to VIII are attending Aghasthiya's ELP (Explore Learning Project). Details of experiments are sent through WhatsApp. Students carry out the experiments and then report about the same.

Historian Pradeep Chakravarthy conducted online story telling sessions for the children. He told stories about various kings of Tamil Nadu.

"I love to listen to stories. The sessions were interesting. He spoke about the *Thanjavur Periya Koil* (Brihadeeswara temple) and various kings including Sarfoji, who ensured girls too, went to schools. He also told us how Thanjavur was the place where art forms thrived."

Vasanthi Std VII

Teacher Trainings during lockdown days



Sevalaya's teaching staff have been busy during this period preparing detailed lesson plans for the new *Samacheer Kalvi* text books of all classes.

Interesting hands-on activities, teaching aid and video links have been incorporated to make the teaching learning experience an enriching one for the students.

Many staff have signed up for online courses to upgrade their knowledge. 29 staff of the Primary school are doing

Madras Dyslexia Association's online E training course which will help them to identify students facing learning difficulties and adapting teaching methodologies suitable to them.

Vidya Badri, Science Teacher in a private school and an educationist is conducting training sessions on select topics in Physics for the Science teachers of Stds VI to XII. She is also conducting sessions for all teachers on using technology for online classes like google classrooms.

Shanthi Gurumoorthi, post graduate in Commerce and an approved Secondary School teacher by the Ministry of Education, Singapore is conducting online Accountancy classes.

About 20 teachers are also participating in the four day Teacher Training Programme conducted by Agathsy Foundation. Department teachers are polishing their teaching skills by

conducting micro teaching classes amongst themselves and assessing their knowledge levels through small tests conducted by them amongst themselves.

They are improving their communication skills through Talking Yak, an Android-based English teaching system made specifically for native Hindi and Tamil speakers.

Online book reviews are held with small groups reviewing a book online. Videos dealing with student psychology, ways to capture and retain attention of students, understand adolescents are circulated among teachers and groupwise discussions held on the learnings gained.

The unexpected lockdown has thus provided an opportunity to upgrade and improve knowledge levels, experiment and implement online teaching methods and tap into hidden reserves of talents and skills of both teachers and students.

Sevalaya staff drive relief operations



For team of 30 Sevalaya employees, including a few Trustees, life and routine in the Covid 19 times have been very different. They have been involved in planning and distribution of equipment and groceries worth ₹ 1.5 crores, 35 tonnes of essential provisions, 1500 meals to people gripped by hunger. Meanwhile, a contingent of 15 employees have left behind their families, staying at the campuses and taking care of residents for over two months. Working without a break, they hugely appreciate the occasional support from employees who volunteer to chip in.

Corona brought routine life to a halt from 25th March 2020 across the country but all centres of Sevalaya, community colleges and school were closed even from 21st March 2020. Sevalaya's prime focus was the safety and well being of its 200 residents at Kasuva campus and the 10 elders at the Thanjavur centre. The staff staying in the residential quarters within the Kasuva campus and an essential crew including kitchen staff, caregivers and gaushala staff who volunteered to stay in the campus itself, took over the care of the residents.

Soon Sevalaya started responding to the distressing situation that was developing all around. Many corporates were quick to act. Partnering with them, Sevalaya swung into action, distributing provisions and cooked food to affected communities, and moving vital equipment for the fight against Corona, to hospitals.

Planning and co ordination apart, much of the physical effort, including muscle power, logistics and transportation came from within the Sevalaya family.

This meant identification of the stressed areas, purchase of groceries and vegetables, packing relief kits, cooking and distributing meals in a safe manner. Some corporates were ready to give valuable medical kits to district hospitals.

The well-coordinated efforts of P Prasanna, VP Corporate Relations and his team who got the funds from the Corporates, D Vimala, VP Accounts and Admin and her team, who cleared the bills and A A Kingston, VP, Operations and R Ganesh, Head Purchases & Stores and their team helped in procuring the required items in required quantities on time.

Groceries had to be unloaded, packed into kits and distributed to many villages in Chengalpet, Chennai, Kanchipuram, Thanjavur, Thiruvallur, Trichy Districts. In addition food was cooked in community kitchen and distributed in villages in Thiruvallur District.

Residential staff of Kasuva centre - M T Anand, Headmaster Primary School, K Karuppaswamy, Gaushala Supervisor, A Sankarapandiyan, Physical Education Director, T Santhraj, Administrative Assistant, K Purushothaman of Purchases & Stores and teaching staff V Mahariga G Palaniswamy, K Pandi and teachers staying outside the campus – S C Suresh, D Prathap, D Umar, R Kannan, C Tamilvanan, B Dinesh Kumar, V Nithyanandam, K Ravi, S Satish Kumar and M M Bharathpandiyan, K Kalaiselvan, Volleyball Coach, who moved into the campus during lockdown period as a volunteer and Andrews Jesudoss, a former employee of Sevalaya pitched in to carry out the work in a well-coordinated, perfect, professional manner. The support of the maintenance team of drivers and cleaners was crucial for the successful implementation of the Covid 19 relief operations. They were going about from one place to another either bringing in a the essential goods or carrying the kits to different areas.

This strong team of M Subramani, E Ganeshbabu, S Purushothaman, P Nagenthiran, C Anandan, M Ilayaraja, E Thirunavukarasu and V Uthayakumar were literally the backbone of the entire operations.



A 30 strong Team Sevalaya has been involved in planning and distribution of equipment and groceries worth ₹ 1.5 crores, 35 tonnes of essential provisions, and 1500 meals to people gripped by hunger.

Grocery kits were distributed to families of the underprivileged in Lalgudi and Thanjavur Districts. PPE Kits were also distributed to the Govt Hospital in Trichy.

The entire relief operations in Thanjavur/ Trichy and Lalgudi were coordinated by A Mageswaran, Trustee based in Thanjavur and K Muthuramakrishnan, Advisor, based in Lalgudi with support from staff and volunteers of Thanjavur centre.



Volunteers were also needed to give the staff staying inside the campus, like kitchen staff and caretakers, some respite. The small crew has been working at full throttle from 21st March, during the lockdown period without a break.

B Nirmala, Headmistress of Sevalaya School, S Kanchana, Head - Value Education, L N Anupriya, Head Donor Relations- Retail, M Mathan Kumar, Lab Technician course Instructor, Sunguvaracharam Community College, N A Karthika, Staff Nurse at Mambakkam Medical Centre, K Mohan, AC Instructor, Kasuva Community college and K Kalaiselvan, Volleyball coach offered to stay in the Kasuva campus and contribute in all possible ways.

While Nirmala, Anupriya and Kanchana gave the employees in the kitchen a well-deserved break, Karthika assisted the in house doctor and took care of all needs of the Old Age home residents at Kasuva. Mathan Kumar and Mohan assisted the Gaushala employees in various ways including the arduous task of collecting and storing 435 bundles of hay. Mathan kumar, who is from a family of farmers helped in the organic fields.

"Money comes and goes, not people"

From her childhood, Janani Balakrishnan's role model was her mother Meenakshi. Within one year of Janani's birth in Madurai, her father N Balakrishnan, working with BSNL developed health complications leading to kidney transplant. Meenakshi became the pillar of strength for her husband and the family in every way: physically, mentally and financially. Being a woman, managing her husband's health expenses with her salary alone whenever he took unpaid leave, was a tough challenge. But all through the tough times, anyone who saw Meenakshi used to comment how she always had a smile on her face, how she helped so many people in many small ways she could and commended her inner strength.

An observant young girl, Janani learnt a great lesson from her mother, that money just comes and goes, but not the people. "My mother volunteered for helping the blind kids in writing exams, involved me in eye camps, volunteering in temples and other occasions to cook and serve the poor, volunteered and helped in a free school in Vellore", recalls Janani. She learnt the importance of education from



her father who used to show Meenakshi as an example and say, "If Mom hadn't studied and got a job in her hand, our life would have been unimaginable." That message stuck in the children's mind. Both Janani and her brother Ramesh Kumar did Engineering.

Janani vividly remembers an incident from 2001. "During the Gujarat earthquake, mom urged me to collect some money in my area. So me and 7 of my friends spoke to several people and collected ₹ 1000. For an 8th standard student, at that time it was a very big deal. And I felt the satisfaction that in some small way we could help."

Supporting the needy soon became her nature. "My mother even asked me to donate a percentage of my first salary to couple of teachers, who were teaching in a free school. So in some form, she urged me to donate and help the people in need, and I also felt a satisfaction in

giving," says Janani.

At the age of 50, Meenakshi passed away since she didn't concentrate on her health throughout her life. Unfortunately, it was just one month before Janani's wedding. She had made all the wedding arrangements, taking care of each and every detail.

Janani's husband Mahendran, an Engineer in EEE" is an exact replica of my mom" says Janani. "He understands me, takes care of me, encourages me in every form. Just like my mom, he also finds a joy and satisfaction in helping people in any small way he can."

Mahendran introduced her to K Muthuramakrishnan, popularly known as KMRK. By common consensus, KMRK is a phenomenon. In his seventies, he is amazingly active, participating in social activities, organizing and donating to charitable activities. On the Board of Sevalaya, KMRK is the spearhead of Sevalaya's free meal scheme and the old age home at Thanjavur.

On hearing about Sevalaya from KMRK, Janani was impressed with the services of the organisation and started regularly donating for the past 4 years, including endowment for a girl child's education and an elder. Mahendran visited Sevalaya and is very appreciative of its services.

"We donate a small amount from our pay check whenever we can", says Janani with characteristic humility. And adds: "Our long term plan is to start a Home for the senior citizens and help the underprivileged children for education.

time Venkatachalapathy was a Chemistry teacher in Arunmanai Girls higher secondary school. He learnt about the services of Sevalaya and approached Sevalaya seeking help. He found that most of the children came to school without having breakfast.

The low energy led to lack of concentration. Most of the parents were daily wage earners, leaving for work early in the morning, forcing the children to skip their breakfast. At that point he approached Sevalaya. For over 6 years, Sevalaya has been giving breakfast for about 750 children of Std X, XI and XII of his school.

Venkatachalapathy helped 2 girl students to get coaching for NEET exams from Thamarai international school. He says helping this poor children brings him utmost happiness.



was a gesture from Sevalaya for the economically disadvantaged students.

This association dates back 6 years, to a

T Venkatachalapathy took charge as the headmaster of Govt high school in Achampatti, Thanjavur late last year. His wife Kasthuri, is also a government school teacher.

It was in Venkatachalapathy's daily routine to carry for 40kms from his house to the school breakfast for 57 students of std X, XI and XII during this year January and February. The breakfast

Volunteers make a difference



From 16th April 2020, Volunteers from Standard Chartered Global Business Services (SCGBS) started doing virtual volunteering with the residential elders and children every week.

Totally 12 volunteers have interacted with elders and children so far, spending a total of 12 person hours a week.

They have a fixed schedule for these activities. From Monday to Saturday they talk to elders. The volunteers and their family members interact with the elders through video calls.

Every week 5 volunteers and their family members talk to 5 elders. For children, there are craft making classes on Wednesday and Saturday. Totally 10 children have attended these sessions.

Other than corporate volunteering individual volunteers are also taking classes regularly through Google Meet or Skype.

Pranav Prakash, a student of Std XI who is residing at Dubai referred by our donor A V Senthil, is teaching Science subject to 12 students of std VIII to X every Friday, 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm.

Sue Humphreys, volunteer from UK, is teaching spoken English to 10 children of the hostel every Monday, Thursday and Friday from 12 to 12.40 p.m

J Krishnan, a regular donor, took Maths class for Stds VIII and IX on 1st May 2020 and for Stds X and XI on 4th May 2020.

14 students from Std VI to VIII are attending Aghasthiya's ELP (Explore Learning Project). Details of experiments are sent through What's app.

Students carry out the experiments and then report their observations.

So far we were talking to people who visited us in person. This video calling is a totally new experience for us. It also gives us a nice feeling when the family members of the volunteers also join the call and enquire about our well being.

S Mahalakshmi, Resident, Sevalaya's Old Age Home, Kasuva

NEET exam training

An IT professional and Sevalaya's longtime well wisher Mahalakshmi Annadurai is guiding and helping 5 students 4 from Std XI and 1 from Std XII, after a due selection process, to prepare for the NEET exams through online coaching and by conducting several tests.

We are studying 12 hours per day. Mahalakshmi Mam contacts us atleast

8 times a day, right from a good morning call in the morning till night. I don't have internet facility at home.

She gave me a wifi modem, paid for the net package and also has given me a laptop.

She has also connected us with a NEET coaching centre in Madurai, which conducts online tests. She is like a mother to us.

Jayasree, Std XI

Organic farm feeds 200 residents



When the entire world came to a halt, industries and offices closed, people remained inside their doors, one thing that kept running was agriculture.

At the time of acute anxieties, Sevalaya's self reliance in fruits, vegetables and milk facilitated running the kitchen at Kasuva

campus, for 200 residents. It eliminated the risk in the staff stepping out of the campus for daily purchases. The daily average production has been 15 kgs – fully meeting residents' needs.

Sevalaya does its organic farming in three-acre farm. The gaushala which

shelters 65 cows including 55 dry cows, supports organic farming. Feed for these cows are also grown in the farm. There is a separate cow grazing area to let them free rather than tying them up and feeding them. Cow dung and urine are used as bio fertilizers, pesticides and for feeding the bio gas plant. The vegetable wastes from the kitchen also goes into the bio gas plant. Thus, 100% percent of the produce are used. Nothing is wasted.

The plot is divided into 8 parts, for a variety of crops: banana plantation, coconut plantation, few mango, papaya, guava and amla trees apart from vegetable crops and greens. There is one dedicated slot to grow CO4 grass to feed our cows. With plants growing native varieties of vegetables, there are climbers such as bitter gourd, ridge gourd, snake gourd and bottle gourd.

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The Indian resistance

The Asiatic Department could not get more than 500 Indians to register themselves. They arrested one Rama Sundaram for non-compliance, under the impression that a large number of Indians would register themselves. But this ended in a whimper. Rama Sundaram turned out to be a false coin. Inspite of all the attention showered up on him by the Jail authorities, as well as by the community, jail appeared to be irksome to him and he bid a final good bye to the Transvaal and the movement.

"Indian Opinion" was a weekly journal published in English and Gujarathi. Through the medium of this news of the week was disseminated among the community. For the officers, this paper became the mirror of the current history of the Indian community. They thus came to know that the strength of the movement could not be broken by any means so long as certain leaders were at large.

Some of the leading Satyagrahis were served notice to appear before the Magistrate. Those who had been

summoned before the court on the day specified-Saturday, December 28, 1907. to show cause why having failed to apply, they should not be ordered to leave the Transvaal within a given period.

The magistrate conducted each case separately and ordered all the accused to leave the Transvaal within a specified period. The time limit expired on January 10, 1908. On the same day, Gandhi and others were called upon to attend the Court for the sentence. Gandhi made a short statement. His compatriots at Pretoria had been sentenced to 3 months' imprisonment with hard labour. They had also been fined a heavy amount, in lieu of payment of which they would receive a further period of 3 months' hard labour. Gandhi pleaded that, as he had committed a graver offence, he should be imposed a heavier penalty.

His request was not conceded and he was sentenced to 2 months' simple imprisonment. Batch after batch of Satyagrahis were awarded punishment, and the numbers swelled to 150.

Gandhi makes a special mention of P.K.Thambi Naidoo. He was a Tamilian born in Mauritius, where his parents had migrated from Madras State. Even though he had never visited India, his love for his homeland knew no bounds.

In the Jail, the Satyagrahis had decided to obey all the jail rules so long as they were not inconsistent with their self respect or their religious convictions. Even though the prisoners without hard labour were permitted to wear their own dresses, they opted to wear prison uniform. As per rules, they would be entitled to wear clothing appropriate to the same class of prisoners. They accepted to wear hard labour prisoners' dress due to the paucity of appropriate clothes. The authorities permitted the Satyagrahi prisoners to cook their own food. They elected Thambi Naidoo as their chef.

After they had been in jail for over 15 days, Mr. Albert Cartwright, Editor of the "Transvaal Leader", a Johannesburg daily came to see Gandhi. He was a broad minded journalist who had almost always supported the Indian cause.

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Ramamoorthy, the organic farmer in charge, experimented with continuous cyclical production of multiple crops in such a way there is a constant supply of different varieties of vegetables. This eliminated the risk of stepping out for purchasing vegetables. This farm has around 5 varieties of greens and a few varieties of vegetables which includes brinjal, okra, broad beans, carrot, beetroot, onion, chillies, raddish, cluster beans, cowpea. Tomatoes are grown in a separate farm.

Borders were planted with maize and a few varieties of crops, to attract insects as a mode of pest control. Flowers of Chrysanthemum plants attracted the heroes of farming honey bees!.

Thus, with the help of such proper

planning and execution Sevalaya has escaped from both virus and food shortage.

A safe, reliable and local food system is one of the most important resources for a community. None of us know what the coming weeks and months will bring, but we do know that natural cycles of life will continue - photosynthesis will take place, plants will continue to grow, and we will tend to grow them with loving care.

The farming activities have attracted volunteering by interested staff who love farming. Mohan, the community college AC instructor, is one.

Another enthusiast is Madhan, working as lab instructor at our Sunguvar chathiram community college, who moved in to the Kasuva campus with his wife Karthika, staff nurse at

Mambakkam.

" My family has agricultural background, so I have quite some knowledge in agriculture. Karthika and myself thought we should do something for Sevalaya at the time of unusual need.

As a nurse she opted to serve the elders in old age home. I chose to work in agriculture field. It's nice that all the staff who were staying inside cooperated well that the process is going on."



Send your comments to:

City Office:

Sevalaya, No 54, P S Sivaswamy Road (North), Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004, Tamil Nadu, India.

Phone: 97109 07675, 94443 33529, 044-24982204

E-mail: sevalayabhuvana@sevalaya.org; vpoperations@sevalaya.org

www.sevalaya.org; www.facebook.com/sevalaya/; www.youtube.com/sevalayacharity

Correspondents: Anupriya L N, Kingston A A, Prasanna P, Vijaya R, Dr Gajalakshmi J R

Layout: Rekha Perumal, Arun G

Editorial & Design Consultant:
Thomas T Abraham