

Office space worth ₹2 crores donated to Sevalaya



After over 3 decades of existence, Sevalaya now has its own administrative office premises, within city limits. This has been made possible by the magnanimity of Lakshmi Venkatraman, Art Critic, who had gifted her flat at Alwarpet worth ₹2 crores to Sevalaya.

The new office is a 3BHK apartment located at 1st floor, Pushkarni Apartments, 12 Ananda Road, Alwarpet. The Chief Guests of the event were R Nataraj IPS (Retd), MLA, Mylapore Constituency, Lakshmi Venkatraman, Art Critic, A Chandrasekharan, Advocate and N Srinivasan, Chartered Accountant and

Secretary of the Flat welfare Association.

Sevalaya Murali welcomed the gathering. He mentioned about the steady progress of Sevalaya and its achievements. He thanked Lakshmi Venkatraman for her noble gesture and the trust reposed in Sevalaya and Chandrasekharan, Advocate for helping to complete the registration formalities smoothly.

A Chandrasekharan congratulated Sevalaya for its immense growth and offered his support to Sevalaya in all its future endeavours.

Lakshmi Venkatraman handed over

the house deed to Sevalaya Murali and expressed her happiness for helping a good NGO to continue their services.

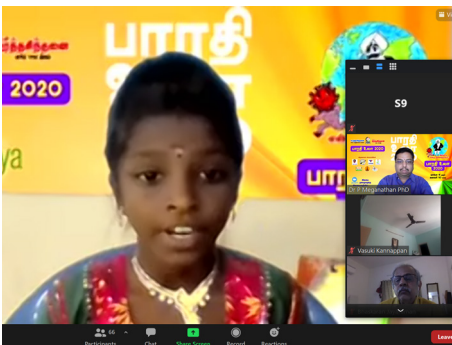
N Srinivasan said it was a higher calling from above to have Sevalaya operating within the building premises and offered his support.

The Chief Guest R Nataraj, IPS (Retd) MLA, praised Sevalaya Murali for his achievements. He saw Sevalaya Murali as a esteemed role model for the public and future generations. He spoke about advocacy and how it should be dealt with a pure conscience. He ended his speech by denoting that the apartments will be encompassed by good vibrations with the presence of Sevalaya, a Charity that works for the welfare of the underprivileged.

The Chief Guests were presented with mementos. P Kannan, South Head, Bajaj Finance, congratulated Sevalaya Murali and presented him a bouquet.



Bharathi Ula - taking Bharathi to schools



Uratha Sinthanai, a Chennai based NGO organises *Bharathi Ula*- a month long programme to take Bharathi to schools, in December every year to commemorate Bharathi's birth

anniversary on December 11 every year. This year Sevalaya children participated in the programme conducted online on 6th December 2020. The children sang Bharathiyar songs. The students also delivered speeches on Bharathiyar's *Puthiya Athichudi*.

Impressed by the performance of the students, the Chief Guest Dr P Meganathan, Managing Director, TAPAMS group of companies, awarded a total cash prize of ₹10,000 to the participants.

Sevalaya Murali, in his speech, highlighted the struggles faced in getting

permission to install the statue of Bharathi Chellammal in Kadayam. "The apathy of the Government officers in processing the files was disheartening. Sevalaya only wants permission to install the statue. We do not seek any grant from the government for this project" he said.

Special Guest Yaar Kannan, film director, appealed to all members of *Uratha Sinthanai* to join hands and support Sevalaya to realise its dream of installing Bharathi Chellammal statue at Kadayam by making joint appeals to the concerned officials.

Rajaji remembered

Sevalaya celebrated the Birth Anniversary of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari at Kasuva Centre on 10th December 2020.

The Chief Guest of the event was Dr R K Raghavan, IPS(Retd), Former Director, CBI. Prof N N Ramanathan, a dedicated admirer of Rajaji and Dr K Kannan, Retd Professor of Chemistry and a Gandhian, also participated in the online event.

Sevalaya students presented a cultural programme at the start of the function. They sang and danced to the songs composed by Rajaji.

Dr R K Raghavan spoke to the students about the righteousness and fearlessness of Rajaji, his patriotism and selflessness. He expressed happiness about the opportunity to talk to students about Rajaji, the leader and statesman whom he greatly admires.

Dr K Kannan gave a brief speech about Rajaji and sang the Tamil version of Vaishnava Janatho, a favourite Bhajan of Mahatma Gandhi.

He also spoke about his father, Gandhi Ashram Krishnan, a freedom fighter and a disciple of Rajaji and recollected his close



association with the great leader.

Earlier oratorical, quiz and essay competitions on the life of Rajaji were conducted online, in which 836 students from 38 districts participated. 150 students were selected as prize winners.

Prizes were distributed to those students locally, who could attend the function. For the rest of the winners, prizes and certificates were couriered to their homes.



Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan – Science Competition



Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan (VVM) is India's largest science talent examination for students of Stds VI to XI, to identify bright minds with scientific attitude and to popularize science.

The Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, Vigyan Vijnanabharathi (VIBHA), a Swadeshi Science Movement at National Level and NCERT have come together to conduct this examination.

This year the examination was conducted online on 2 days - 29th November 2020 and 30th November 2020.

This year, the students were given the option of writing this open book examination in regional languages , including Tamil, upto National level.

P Meera, our long term donor and volunteer who conducts Chemistry classes for the students, sponsored the 30 students who participated in this examination. She also helped the students prepare for the examination by conducting classes, creating a dedicated WhatsApp group for the students and posting study materials there and following up with them. 10 students have qualified for the next level examinations.

" I enjoyed attending the sessions conducted by Meera Mam and writing the VVM exam. I am now very much interested in learning Science and exploring. This is a great opportunity for me.

Nithyasri V, X D

Donor Birthday Celebration



Ashok, Vice President, Tulir and his wife, Gajalakshmi, celebrated their son, Mathesvar's 9th birthday with the residents of Sevalaya on 12th December 2020. Ashok & family joined in the online Birthday party with their family members. M T Anandan, Centre Head, Kasuva, welcome the gathering. A colourful cultural programme was presented by the children of Sevalaya with Mathesvar playing drums. The Elders and children of Sevalaya wished him a blessed birthday as Mathesvar cut the cake. Snacks were distributed to the residents of Sevalaya.

Parakram Yuva Sansad 2020



As a part of the new educational policy to improve critical thinking skills and create a better awareness and understanding of social issues Parakram Yuva Sansad had organised a Students' Parliament session from 1st December 2020 to 7th December 2020.

8 Students of Std XII participated in this first ever initiative in India to introduce the Indian Parliament to children from different sections of society.

Based on the students choices of being a part of the ruling party or opposition they were asked to act as particular political leaders/ personalities and express their views on reservation for women, new

educational policy and any personal insights of social issues they see around them.

On the final day there was a marathon debate session with questions being put by the two sides asking leaders to justify the stands they had taken on various issues.

It was a good educative experience for all participants and the staff who helped them to think the pros and cons of the social issues of our times. The Online programme was coordinated by A Hindumathi, Social Teacher.

The debates were very interesting. We had a chance to know and discuss many social issues like caste, reservation, alcoholism and child labour. I played the role of Priyanka Gandhi in the debate. This programme has improved my knowledge and communication skills.

S Anusuya Std XII

Certificate Distribution function



Certificates were distributed to 85 students of Sevalaya's Community College at Thirubuvanai, Puducherry, who had completed Tailoring, AC Mechanic and Fundamentals of computer courses.

The certificate distribution function was held on 9th December 2020.

The Chief Guest, S Nandhakumar, Executive HR & Admin, Revocoat India Private Limited, distributed the

certificates to the students.

Joseph Samuel, Ex Chairman, Corporation of Chennai, 7th Zone, Ambattur, presented certificates to 102 students of Tally & E-Publishing at a function held at Sevalaya's Community College, Ambattur on 11th December 2020.

Maposi student seminar



An online seminar for the students was conducted by Padmasri Silambu Selvar Dr Ma Po Si Peravai on the occasion of Saraswathi Pooja on 25th October 2020.

Dr V G Santhosam, Chairman, VGP World Tamil Sangam was the Chief Guest at the Seminar.

M Divya and V Sowmiya, of Std XI from Sevalaya participated in the seminar in which 6 children from various schools participated

M Divya spoke about Maposi and Mahakavi Bharathiyar while V Sowmiya spoke about Maposi and Kattabomman.

The Chief Guest appreciated the students for their oratorical skills. Dr B Senthil, Chairman, Ma Po Si Peravai, provided a Vote of Thanks.

Joy of giving



To spread the joy of Christmas, employees of Bank of America, Hatley and Frost & Sullivan donated gifts to the children of Sevalaya.

The donors ordered gifts via Amazon and donated clothes, shoes, chocolates etc. Sharmilee Sriram, a UK donor donated various Christmas gifts to the children of Sevalaya.

Bharathiyar day celebrations across the locations



Sevalaya celebrated the birth anniversary of Mahakavi Bharathiyar at Kasuva Centre on 11th December 2020.

The Chief Guest Preetam Mehra, Secretary, Rotary Club of Chennai Metropolis, in his address to the students shared 5 important life lessons he learnt from Mahakavi Bharathiyar - to learn well, be bold, set goals and achieve them, respect women and be creative.

Earlier oratorical, essay writing, drawing, quiz, and poem recitation competitions were held. 1195 students from 38 district participated in these online competitions and 150 were selected as winners.

Geetha Lakshmi, of Std VII, Sevalaya who won the best speaker award in the oratorical competitions held on the occasion of Bharathiyar's birth anniversary, delivered her prize winning speech.

Prizes were distributed to the students locally, who could attend the function. Prizes and certificates were couriered to the other winners to their homes.



Joseph Samuel, Ex Chairman, Corporation of Chennai, 7th Zone, Ambattur was the Chief Guest at the Bharathiyar Day celebrations at Sevalaya Ambattur Community college.



K Mohanraj, PG Asst, Native Hr Sec School, Kumbakonam, was the Chief Guest at the Bharathiyar Day celebrations at Sevalaya Eraharam Tuition Centre, Thanjavur.



R Sadhish Kumar, Advocate & Commissioner of Oaths Special Public Prosecutor, Notary Public, was the Chief Guest at the Bharathiyar Day celebrations at Sevalaya Thanjavur Centre.



R Shanmugam, VAO, Mambakkam, was the Chief Guest at the Bharathiyar Day celebrations at Sevalaya Mambakkam Centre.



Rama Sivarajane, Organizer, Jawahar Hr Sec School, Koodappakam, was the Chief Guest at the Bharathiyar Day celebrations at Sevalaya Thirubuvanai Centre, Puducherry.



I Gokulakrishnan, VAO, Uthiramerur, was the Chief Guest at the Bharathiyar Day celebrations at Sevalaya Uthiramerur Community College.



Kavignar Tamilpriyan, Secretary, Mahakavi Bharathi Kalai Ilakkiya Mandram, Melakandai, was the Chief Guest at the Bharathiyar Day celebrations at Sevalaya Zamin Endathur Community College.

Lighting the torches for the next generation



Children's Day was celebrated at Kasuva Centre on 17th November 2020. R Dhasthageer, District Child Protection Officer, Tiruvallur and S Komala, Founder, Iniya Udhayam Charitable Trust, were the Chief Guests at the event. A colourful cultural dance was performed by the students with traditional grace.

The Chief Guest advised the students to set goals for themselves and to acquire knowledge of virtue by developing their moral values.

S Komala sang songs for the children and told them to unravel their innate talent that God has bestowed on everyone. She explained about her organization and encouraged them to reach a good position in life as well. She applauded the students who participated in the speech competition.

V N Jagan, Std X, V Lavanya, Std IX and R Rajeshwari, Std VIII were the students who secured the top-ranking positions. The Speech, Drawing and Sports competitions were held on behalf of the District Child Protection Unit. Prizes were distributed to the winners and participants by the Chief Guest.



K Rajeswari, Head constable, Taluk station, Kumbakonam, was the Chief Guest at the Children's Day celebrations at Sevalaya's Evening Centre, Eraharam.



Dr V Balamurugan, Deputy Correspondent, Gandhigram Trust – Avvai Ashram, Sivasailam, was the Chief Guest at the Children's Day celebrations at Sevalaya Ravanasmudram Centre. The event was blessed with a surprise visit from Sridhar Vembu, CEO, Zoho and Sundara Moorthy, Europa Fashion Head.



M Rajarathinam, Retd HM, Govt Higher Secondary School, Sengadu, was the Chief Guest at the Children's Day celebrations at Sevalaya Mambakkam Centre.



K Rajammal, Community Development Project Officer, Kandamangalam Block, was the Chief Guest at the Children's Day celebrations at Sevalaya Thirubuvana Centre, Puducherry.



V Manigandan, President of Rotary Club, Uthiramerur, was the Chief Guest at the Children's Day celebrations at Sevalaya Uthiramerur Community College.



M Mathimohan, Program Officer NSS, Hindu Higher Secondary School, Madhuranthagam, was the Chief Guest at the Children's Day celebrations at Sevalaya Zamin Endathur Community College.

Imprinting moral values

Dr Ayalur Vaidyanathan holds a Doctorate in Chemical Engineering. He was a Professor at Regional Engineering College (now National Institute of Technology), Trichy and was also a visiting professor in IIT Bombay.

He has worked for 20 years as an Advisor to Saudi Basic Industries Corporation, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Now he is leading a peaceful retired life at Bangalore with his son and daughter.



His father was a Senior Advocate in the Madras High Court while his mother was a housewife.

“My parents are my role models. From them I imbibed the values of simplicity, honesty, compassion, and work ethics.. I have always wanted to support the cause of education. With this aim, I formed the Ayalur Vaidyanathan

Education Trust, through which I sponsor the education of poor children. With this aim I was searching for NGOS working in the field of education. It was then my friend referred Sevalaya.

I visited Sevalaya and was very impressed with the services they offer. The dedication of the staff, the opportunities Sevalaya provides to the staff to upgrade their skills and knowledge and the transparency of the organization assured me that my contributions will be put to good use and will benefit the needy. Now through my Trust I am sponsoring the education of 6 children.

Institutions like Sevalaya give me hope. I will offer my wholehearted support to Sevalaya for all its activities for the welfare of the poor.”

Sarath sets sails

Sarath hails from Kadiyapattanam, a small village in Kanyakumari District. He has an elder sister, Shalini. Both of them were in the care of their relatives for a few years as their parents passed away when Sarath was born.

The relatives then admitted them in Sevalaya as they were no longer able to take care of the children.

Denied the love of parents at a young age, Sarath and his sister found it in Krishnaswamy, Head Warden of Sevalaya, whom they address as “Father”.

Sarath joined Std III when he arrived at Sevalaya and began his new journey. He was an average kid in academics who preferred Science till Std X and scored good scores in the subject. He was a basketball player who played for the divisional for his school team. He also had artistic talent to create realistic portraits mimicking the minute details. He secured several prizes in art competitions and wanted to pursue Arts as his higher education but unfortunately, he couldn't clear his entrance exams. Sarath reluctantly joined BCom in which he has



Sarath, student of Sevalaya, receiving an offer letter from CM of Tamil Nadu among other Govt officials, Maritime Foundation Charitable Trust and HIMT

completed 1 year but has some arrears.

His dream was to become an Artist but due to his family situations, he put his dream on hold for the moment. Andrew and Devaraj, Art teachers of Sevalaya, had Sarath under their wings to motivate him to improve his art skills by making him do several art related works at the School.

They were his favourite teachers in Sevalaya. He enrolled himself in a poster competition where he secured 1st prize as he understands his tasks and executes them proficiently.

Meanwhile, Sarath got a golden opportunity to get admission in Hindustan Institute of Maritime Training, Mumbai. This is a State Government initiative, where the Government is funding the education of students from orphanages, to pursue this maritime course.

The six months training programme commences from January 2021.

Sarath understood the impact of this opportunity and promised his peers that he would work hard to secure a bright future. He wanted to move up the ladder in his future career and to become the Captain of a ship.

Sarath is extremely happy and he is literally on cloud nine. His voice over the phone was full of enthusiasm and confidence. “I will work hard to secure a high position in my Maritime work. I want to support for my sister's marriage after she finishes her teacher training as it's my responsibility and prove to my relatives who discouraged us from the beginning. I want to support Sevalaya when I start earning and provide for those in need.”, says Sarath brimming with confidence.

Ashok runs on his own algorithms and codes

Ashok Kumar, son of a daily wage labourer from Magaral village in Thiruvallur is a bright student of Sevalaya, who completed Std XII in May 2020. His interest in computer science was evident even in his school days. He was the go to person for the teachers also to make short videos and design posters for the school. It was Ashok who created the video for Design For Change Competition in which Sevalaya participated.

Impressed by his interest in learning, Anand Subramanian, a volunteer from Dubai, sponsored online course in Programming hub which covered fundamentals, cybersecurity, ethical hacking, C Programming language, C#, Python programming and Advanced Python, HTML and CSS.

Sevalaya had approached Aksharam Educational a not-for-profit organization of helping the education of academically promising but financially challenged students and through their sponsorship, Ashok has joined BCA in Sriram Arts and



Science College, Veppampattu.

Ashok has created an Online Crash Course on how to create interactive teaching videos with 2D/3D animation and motion graphics. Ashok was the resource person for the training programme organised by Aksharam Foundation for Government school staff in Chengelpet in which 200 teachers participated.

"Sevalaya gave me enough opportunities and freedom to practise whatever I learnt in online course. The teachers were very encouraging. I am very happy that I have got a chance to give back to Sevalaya. I am teaching Python programming to current batch of Std XII students and I enjoy doing it." Says Ashok with a bright smile.

Awareness on Child Safety



Child Safety Week was observed at Sevalaya from 14th November to 20th November 2020. The aim of this programme was to create awareness on Child Rights, safety, and awareness to children about Child abuse.

On 15th November 2020, a session on Safety and Hygiene was conducted online for the boys and girls of Sevalaya Homes by Dr Abhirami, Volunteer from Bangalore.

On 16th November the staff of Sevalaya

conducted Life skills session and awareness session on safety for the children. On 17th Children's Day was celebrated at Sevalaya.

On 18th November Sevalaya alumnus Ashok Kumar addressed the students of Melapedu village and spoke to them about road safety measures, safety measures to be taken during COVID-19 pandemic.

On 19th Amal, ex Child Welfare Committee member spoke to the children

explaining about child protection, availability of Child Helpline services. In this session 259 students from all centres of Sevalaya participated.

On 20th November, Vijayakumar, owner of English Academy, Thiruninravur, spoke to te children about good behavior to the children.



Promise given to Gokhale

In Johannesburg, there was a mass meeting of Indians only. After Johannesburg, Gokhale visited Natal and then proceeded to Pretoria, where he was put up by the Union Government at the Transvaal Hotel. Here he met the ministers of the Government including General Botha and General Smuts. By design, Gandhi did not go with Gokhale, as his presence would create a barrier between Gokhale and the ministers who would be handicapped in speaking out without any reserve about what they considered to be the mistakes of the local Indians including Gandhi. Then again they could not with an easy mind make any statement of future policy if they wished to make it.

Gokhale's meeting with the ministers lasted for about two hours, and when he returned, he told Gandhi, "You must return to India in a year. Everything has been settled. The Black Act will be repealed. The racial law will be removed from the emigration Act. The 3 pound Tax will be abolished." Gandhi, of course,

did not share his optimism. But, he was satisfied that Gokhale had obtained this understanding from the ministers. It was his duty to fight only where it was necessary and theirs was a righteous struggle. The promise given to Gokhale would serve as a proof of the justice of the demands and would redouble their fighting spirit if it came to fighting after all. Gandhi did not think that he could return to India in a year and before many more Indians had gone to Jail. Gokhale asserted, "what I have told you is bound to come to pass. General Botha has promised that the Black Act will be repealed, and the 3 Pound Tax will be abolished. You must return to India within 12 months and I will not have any of your excuses."

Gokhale left South Africa on November 12, 1912. At his wish Kallenbach and Gandhi accompanied him as far as Zanzibar. The parting at Zanzibar was painful to Kallenbach and Gandhi. However, Gokhale's visit to South Africa stiffened their resolution, and

the implication and importance of his tour were better understood when the struggle was renewed in an active form.

Gokhale had been assured by the authorities that the 3 pound tax imposed on the Indian community would be taken off in a year and the necessary legislation would be introduced in the next session of the union Parliament. This did not happen.

The Indians decided to include abolition of 3 pound Tax also in their agitation. The breach of a promise made to such a representative as Gokhale was, not only a personal insult to him, but to the whole of India, and as such could not be taken lying down. Thus, the indentured Indians had an opportunity of participating in it. This opened up a fresh field of recruitment for the 'army'. Gokhale was duly apprised of the developments.

(To be continued.)

ShopeSeva offers you what money cannot buy

When you buy from ShopeSeva you support village artisans and the whole village economy. The proceeds go to fund Free school, Orphanage and Old age home run by Sevalaya, a reputed NGO. So when you buy from ShopeSeva, you will receive a lot of heartfelt gratitude. And the satisfaction of good deed.

- Village Handicrafts ■ Organic Plants, Vegetables and fruits
- Organic Pulses and grains ■ Bakery Products ■ Traditional snacks
- Dairy Products ■ Personal Medical Products
- Cleaning and Sanitizing products ■ Festive products



ShopeSeva

15/1 (11/1), East Mada Street, Opposite to Theradi, Mylapore, Chennai - 600004. 9344369226
sales@shope seva.com | ShopeSeva.com | fb.com/shopeSeva



Send your comments to:

City Office:

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

Phone: 99414 50444, 94443 33529

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

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

Correspondents: Anupriya L N, Gowtham Rajasekhar, Kanchana S, Kingston A A, Prasanna P, Vijaya R, Anandan M T

Layout: Rekha Perumal, Arun G

Editorial & Design Consultant:
Thomas T Abraham