



## Sevalaya celebrates 35 years of service



Releasing the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Report themed :“Enlarging footprints: Now 27 centres From L to R: O K Krishna Moorthy, Amarchand Jain, Sevalaya Murali, E Lakshminarayanan, G Ramanathan, Sridhar Gopalan, S V Mani, Thomas T Abraham, A Rangaraj

Sevalaya celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Day on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at the Kasuva campus, where it all began in 1988, with five children under a thatched roof. The event witnessed the coming together of well-wishers, supporters, volunteers, elders and children, both in person and through virtual participation.

Individual and Corporate donors as also Panchayat leaders from Sivanvoil, Kasuva, Dharmapuri and Thillaiyadi were present at the event.

Sridhar Gopalan, Managing Director & CEO of Andritz Technologies, who was the Chief Guest spoke about his rise from very humble beginnings and shared three key success mantras: "Work Hard, Stay Enthusiastic, and have self confidence."

The Chief Guest released the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Report themed “Enlarging footprints: Now 27 centres”.

Reflecting the growth were captivating performances by the elderly residents,

school and Community College students from different Centres across the State, marked by variety: Bhajans to folk dances and gymnastics.

Long serving employees and top performers were recognised.

Thirunavukkarasu won the Best Employee for his unwavering commitment. During the Chellammal Bharathi Rath yatra, he drove the vehicle tirelessly for 2 months without a break. Additionally, staff members from various departments were honoured with 12 Merit Awards while new employees were recognised for superior performance.



*E Thirunavukkarasu receiving the best employee award from the Chief Guest Sridhar Gopalan*

## New primary school classroom opened



With a generous donation of ₹8 lakhs, R Parvathy Ramasubramanian and her brother S Renganathan chose to immortalise the memory of their

math-loving father, by co-sponsoring a class room in the new primary school

## RO plant for primary school



In a remarkable display of corporate social responsibility, FIVES corporate funded the construction of a new RO plant in the primary block at Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School, Kasuva centre.

block. At 824 sq ft, it can comfortably accommodate up to 40 students.

The RO plant, with a capacity of 2000 litres, will significantly benefit over 600 students. The project, worth around ₹9 lakhs, was inaugurated by Rahul Deshmukh, Managing Director, FIVES. Senior officials from FIVES also participated in the event.



*Continued on page 2*



Continued from page 1



The G S Vishwanathan Memorial Endowment Award, created by G Ramanathan, Trustee, Sevalaya and his wife Veena Ramanathan for Science Toppers was presented to M Pavithra, Std X (Science 94/100) and V N Jagan, Std XII (Physics 93/100) to their outstanding academic achievements.

In memory of his mother, who was a



Tamil teacher, G Sankar, a supporter of Sevalaya, created the V Rukmani Memorial Endowment Award for Tamil Toppers, which was presented to six deserving toppers in Tamil from Std X.

Prizes were awarded to the top achievers of Std XII and Std X. V Nithyasri (581/600) secured the top position, closely followed by K Yuvasree (575/600) and N Logeshwari (568/600) in Std XII. In



Std X, M Pavithra (467/500) emerged as the topper, with S Sri Priyanka (461/500) and E Dhivya Dharshini (448/500) securing the second and third positions, respectively.

Making it a memorable and enthusiastic event, Sevalaya continues to shine as a beacon of hope, empowering lives and uplifting communities through education and compassion.



## Cash awards for XII std toppers



On 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023, Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiya Higher Secondary School, Kasuva hosted a special function in collaboration with Ashoka Trust, dedicated to motivating students, especially the XII Std toppers.

The Guest speakers, V Vijayamohan and C P Ravikumar, Indian Post & Telecommunication Accounts and Finance Service (IP & TAFS), interacted with the students, delivering inspirational speeches and emphasizing the significance of education while sharing valuable tips for excelling in Board exams.

The event's highlight was the presentation of cash awards to the deserving XII Std toppers, recognizing their outstanding achievements: V Nithyasri - ₹3500, K Yuvasree - ₹3000 and N Lokeshwari - ₹2500.

300 students from Std XI and XII attended the function, celebrating the pursuit of excellence in education.



Sevalaya Murali was honoured as the Chief Guest at the Guru Purnima celebrations on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 at Thamarai International School, Thanjavur.



# Uninterrupted power for elders of Sevalaya

Wolters Kluwer, an active sponsor of Sevalaya activities, has sponsored a Solar Off-Grid Interactive plant that promises uninterrupted power for the 80 elders of Sevalaya's Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Old Age home in Kasuva centre.

It has a total power output of 10 KW, and consists of 19 Solar panels and 10 hours of battery backup. The project is worth around ₹9.6 lakhs.

The plant was inaugurated by Al Rashed Samira, Director, QA, DXG ELM Engg, and Raju Vaidyanathan, Managing Director, LR ELM, Chennai, representing Wolters Kluwer.

Wolters Kluwer had earlier sponsored a pharmacy building for Mahatma Gandhi Medical Centre in Kasuva. They also installed two 500-litre Solar water heaters for Old Age Home, and a 5-kilowatt Solar Power Plant at Mahakavi



*Inauguration of Solar Off Grid Interactive Plant at Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Old Age Home*

Bharathiyar Community College in Zamin Endathur. The team distributed snacks to children and fruit baskets to elders.

Sevalaya Murali (Founder and Managing Trustee), N Annapurna (Trustee),

P Prasanna (Vice President, Donor Relations) and officials from Wolters Kluwer participated in the inaugural function.

## Inauguration of classroom sponsored by Dr Agarwals



*Dr Athiya Agarwal inaugurating the classroom along with the children*

Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospitals, a dedicated sponsor of Sevalaya's initiatives, generously funded the construction of a new classroom at Sevalaya's Mahakavi

Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School, Kasuva centre. The spacious classroom, spanning 824 sq. ft, accommodates 40 students and was completed with a

project cost of approximately ₹16 lakhs.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023, Dr Athiya Agarwal, Whole-Time Director of Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospital Limited, inaugurated the classroom. In addition, Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospitals is sponsoring the operational expenses of the education resource centre in the tribal village of Koovamula in Gudalur, benefiting 40 tribal children.

Sudha Bala, Director, and Meenakshi Jayaraman, Company Secretary of Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospital, graced the occasion.

P Prasanna, VP of Donor Relations, and Kala Rao, Executive Committee Member, also participated in the inaugural function, marking this excellent collaboration in furthering education and empowering children's lives.

## Actress Revathy celebrates daughter's birthday at Kasuva



On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023, actress Revathy continued her heartwarming tradition by visiting the Kasuva centre to celebrate her daughter's birthday. This marked the eighth consecutive year of this special occasion. As part of the festivities, Revathy graciously sponsored meals for the children and elders at the campus. The children joined in cutting the birthday cake and presented a heartfelt handmade wishing card to the birthday girl, making the day even more memorable.



# WCCG gifts bicycles to 94 Sevalaya children



On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2023, the We are Chennai Cycling Group (WCCG) distributed 94 cycles to students of Sevalaya who had to walk 8 to 10 kilometers to reach the school. The initiative aimed to ease the commuting difficulties faced by these young learners.

S Asokan, the District Revenue Officer, graced the occasion as a Special Guest, expressing joy at witnessing Sevalaya's children aspiring to become future engineers, doctors, and teachers. He thanked Sevalaya and WCCG for arranging

such an impactful programme.

T Divakaran, representing WCCG, emphasized proper maintenance and protection of the bicycles, highlighting the health benefits of cycling for overall well-being.

Felix John from WCCG found inspiration from the COVID-19 pandemic's contrasting experiences, motivating him to start the bicycle distribution programme.

He encouraged the recipients to embrace this opportunity for positive well-being.

Anil Jain, member of WCCG, generously donated sports equipment to Sevalaya. After the distribution, students happily cycled home.



## Cycle *thiruvizha* organised by WCCG



Sevalaya Murali was the Special Guest at the Chennai Cycling *Thiruvizha* organised by the We are Chennai Cycling group (WCCG) in Tharamani, Chennai, on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

The festival united 19 different cyclist groups from across Chennai.

Sevalaya Murali took the opportunity to express gratitude to the Chennai Cyclists Group for their generous donation of 97 bicycles to Sevalaya. He also emphasized the importance of encouraging bicycle usage as a means to promote better

health and environment-friendly transportation alternatives.

The Chief Guest at the festival was C Sylendra Babu, former DGP of Tamil Nadu.

The event served as a wonderful platform to celebrate cycling and its positive impact on communities and the environment.

ShopeSeva had put up a stall with products made by village artisans at the event.

## Basic life support training

On 17<sup>th</sup> June 2023, the Emergency team at Apollo Hospital organised a Basic Life Support training session for 69 students of Mahakavi Bharathiyar Free Community College, Kasuva centre.

Nurse Anans Mohamed conducted the session, providing comprehensive guidance on essential life support techniques, necessary during emergency situations. The training was both educational and interactive, ensuring the participants gained valuable skills and knowledge. Upon the successful completion of the training, certificates were distributed to all the participants.

The session was skillfully organised by E Anandhababu, the CSR executive, and E Balasubramaniam, the Pharmacy executive, both from Apollo Hospital.





# Empowered by Robotics



Nothing perhaps has caught the fancy of children, as robotics has. Robotic classes have become very popular nowadays and they help children think creatively and come up with innovative ideas. Thanks to the BNY Mellon Stem Robotics Training initiative, 350 students from Std V to XII got an introduction to robotics, through Robotex India. The project costs close to ₹19 lacs.

Initiating the project, Manisha Sawant led a robotics orientation programme on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

Through Zoom Meet, 350 students attended the programme. The students were divided into three batches. Two classes, adding up to 2 hours, were held each week for each group. From October to December, Siddharth Vijay and Vrushali took classes via Zoom.

In October, Vrushali introduced robotics, explained what a programme is and then showed the students how to develop a programme using scratch. Students had to enroll themselves and log in to do activities on the website called 'Join Scratch'. The class was fun for the

students. Vrushali gave a demonstration of how to programme greetings for friends. Students acquired independent video game creation skills. It had five steps.

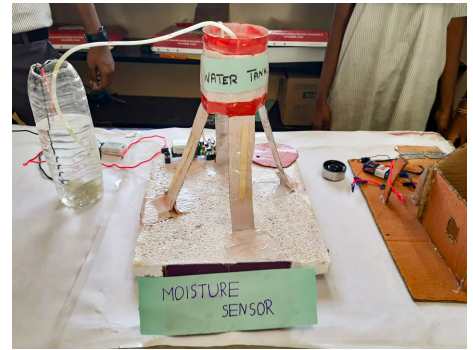
In November and December, the students learnt how to play games such as Jumping Chick, Fruits catching, Virtual Village and ping pong game. Great fun! Who doesn't love games?.

Beginning in January 2023, students attended live classes by Trainer Siddharth Vijay at Kasuva location. Students began utilizing the robotics class gear.

They were taught how to assemble and use motion controls, energy-saving lamps, and dry soil alarms.

In February they learnt to make a theft alarm, water level alert, pre-programmed path robot, and obstacle-avoiding robot. Students demonstrated exercises that trainer Vijay had given them.

Understandably, there was great excitement at the pep they got into the exciting world of robotics.



Learning robotics was a dream for rural kids like me, and BNY Mellon made it feasible. I acquired intriguing skills, including

programming and handling sensors. Grateful for this opportunity.

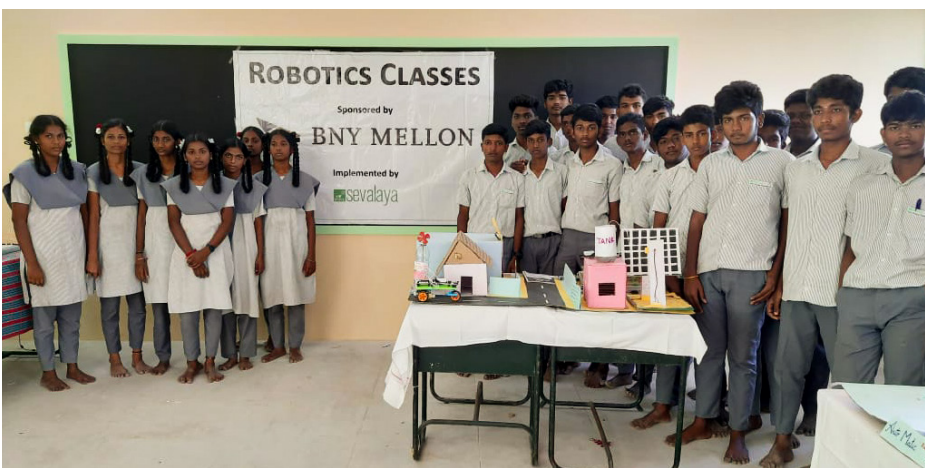
**D Ramya, Std XI**



Robotics education was engaging and enjoyable. Through group activities, we performed various

learning exercises. Thanks to the team, management, and BNY Mellon for this fantastic opportunity.

**N Pavithran, Std VII**





# Education kits presented to 2180 children

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023, educational kits were distributed to 2180 underprivileged children at Mahakavi Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School in Kasuva centre.

Aravind Jayapal, Founder and Managing Trustee of Raindropss Charity Foundation and Chief Minister's State Youth Awardee, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

He praised the children's opportunity to receive free education. Drawing an analogy between a football and a flute, he emphasized the significance of sharing resources and lauded Sevalaya Murali's dedicated service.

The kit had 2 sets of uniforms, books, and stationery, made possible through generous contributions totaling over ₹30 lakhs.

Sevalaya Murali expressed heartfelt



gratitude to all donors for enabling the free provision of these essential resources to the children.

Emphasizing the enduring connection between Sevalaya and Raindropss,

Sevalaya Murali highlighted the importance of leveraging the educational opportunities provided by Sevalaya to excel in life and contribute back to society.

## Education development day celebrations

### Kasuva



On 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023, Kamarajar Day was celebrated at various locations. At Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School, Kasuva centre, the event saw M Ayyappan, District Education Officer of Private Schools in Thiruvallur District, as the esteemed Chief Guest.

He emphasized Kamaraj's birthday as Education Development Day and motivated students to cultivate curiosity, envisioning a future of success and recognition akin to the former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.

### Uthiramerur

Dr M D Antony Arul Prakash, Dean, Aksheyaa College of Arts & Science, Puludivakkam was the Chief Guest at the Kamarajar Day celebrations took place at Mahakavi Bharathiyar Community College,

Uthiramerur on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

35 students from the community college participated in the event.

### Pattinapakkam



Rtn Muralidharan Venkatesh Rotary Club of Madras, Ashok Nagar and Gopi Ramu President of Rotary Club of Madras, Ashok Nagar were the Chief Guest at the Kamarajar Day celebrations took place at Gayathri Memorial Vocational Training Centre, Pattinapakkam on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### Thanjavur



MJF Lion T Rajkumar, District President, Margi Lions Association, Tiruvarur was the Chief Guest at the Kamarajar Day celebrations that took place at Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Krishnan Memorial Free Old Age Home, Thanjavur on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### Ambattur



RTN Gopi Ramu, President Rotary Club of Madras Ashok Nagar, was the Chief Guest at the Kamarajar Day celebrations that took place at Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Community College, Ambattur on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### Gudalur

K Nalla Kumar, Retd, Asst. BT Science, Govt. Higher Secondary School, Gudalur, was the Chief Guest at the Kamarajar Day celebrated at Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Community College, Gudalur on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### Zamin Endathur

Dr G Hariharasudhan, Block Medical Officer, Zamin Endathur, Chengalpeta was the Chief Guest at the Kamarajar Day celebrations took place at Sevalaya's Gayathri Narayanan Memorial Community College and Sevalaya's Janaki Ammal Vijayaraghavachariar Memorial Senior Citizens Home, Zamin Endathur on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023



# “Doing my bit, like a squirrel”

Rotarian PP K Muralidharan Venkatesh did his schooling in TVS High School, Madurai and was the school pupil leader.

His father R Kuppaswamy used to work in Southern Roadways. For his higher studies, Murali took a bank loan. Post his BTech in Chemical Engineering from Alagappa College of Technology in 1983, he joined Bechtel & Hychem, Hyderabad, in Production. In 3 months, he moved to SIP Resins, in Marketing, realising that he preferred to deal with people rather than machines. The next 10 years took him to different parts of India.

“Why work for someone? Why not for oneself?” This thought came to him and Balaji, one of his colleagues. The two started Sri Lakshmi Coats Pvt Ltd, a trading partnership dealing in powder coated paints, acting as South India distributors for Delhi-based Paramount. Soon the partners expanded their business, moving into paint application. In 2005 they put up a unit at SIPCOT, started with 20 employees and then took over another similar unit. That was fulfilment of a guiding wish to create employment. “As an employee I had



often thought: why bosses could not treat employees better? When I was in sales, I would be travelling for 5 days at a stretch, and no one cared about me. Today, we have group insurance cover for all our employees”.

In 2011, Sri Lakshmi Industrial Coatings entered manufacture of powder coated paint. The employee strength has since then grown to 100, and turnover exceeds ₹10 crores. “A far cry from the initial days of delivering materials on own scooter! God has been kind”, says Murali, with great humility.

Murali is married to Kanchana, an MA. M Phil. B Ed. The couple’s first son Badri is a Manager in SBI. Kanchana joined GRT Matriculation as a teacher, when their second son M Balaji started his schooling there. Victim of an autoimmune illness, Balaji had brilliance in him: a school topper who did his BCom and cleared CA in his first attempt. He passed away in 2019. Reconciliation has not been easy for the family.

“From my family and from my school I learned it our responsibility to take care of our fellow brethren. I was not from a well-to-do family, but I started giving small help. In 2004 I joined the Rotary and found that a platform to do things in a bigger way”, explains Murali. A Past President, Murali is an active and giving Rotarian.

Introduced to Sevalaya by E Lakshminarayan, a Sevalaya Trustee, he has been sponsoring meals for the children, on birthdays and such special occasions. In 2008 - 19, he also started an Interact club in Kasuva and Radha, a Sevalaya student, qualified for an international speech contest.

“The work Sevalaya Murali does is phenomenal. Like a squirrel doing its little bit, I try to do what I can. I want to tell everyone: When you make others happy, that makes you happy”, he signs off.

## Chess Academy inaugurated



Sevalaya Chess Academy was inaugurated at Sevalaya’s Mahakavi Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

The initiative was made possible through a collaboration between Young Birds - Manufacturer of Kids Apparels and Drona Academy of Sports and Skills.

S Balaraman, International Arbiter and Joint Secretary of Tamil Nadu State Chess Association, graced the function as the esteemed Chief Guest.

He highlighted the increasing interest of children in chess and their dreams of becoming grandmasters.

He stressed the importance of teaching chess to underprivileged children. Over 900 students from Std III to VIII will receive training three days a week until December 2023, fostering a love for chess and nurturing young talents.

# Thillaiyadi Valliammai - (13)

(Source: "Agony of Valliamma" by Aziz Hassim)

At that juncture, the local magistrate walked in and demanded to know why they were in the male section. Valliamma replied that while they were on their way to Johannesburg, the police just picked them up and lodged them there. The magistrate cut in and asked them whether they had their travel permits. Valliamma defiantly replied, "We are citizens of this country and we don't need permits to travel."

The magistrate, though courteous, firmly told her that they had to go to Pietermaritzburg from where they had come and the court there would decide their fate. He also told them they would have to remain in their cells for a few days. He also allowed Badat to bring their daily meals.

The journey was painful if not agonizing. Valliamma advised her comrades, "The more pain you suffer, the more alive you are. We should be grateful that we live through this agony. It is an experience that will make us stronger."

P K Naidoo, who was guiding the team met them and told them, "They are sure that they will break us! They stuffed us in a tiny cell, with no toilet facilities, a bucket of water – to wash with or to drink – as we see fit, and food full of weevils and roaches.

They give some of us decent food, to tempt the rest of us to fight over it. And they know that, as the days pass, we will

begin to smell and try to create our own fate !

We must prove them wrong! We have to show them that a Tamil woman is made of greater courage and comes from a civilized race. They can brutalize us at will, but our response to it is in our hands. They can't control it."

Valliamma was reminiscing, "My father and mother slaved from early in the morning till late at night, carrying their baskets on their backs. They took nothing that didn't belong to them. My *appa* always told me, 'take a penny that doesn't belong to you and you are no more than a common thief! And my *amma* lived in the belief that money that is stolen, even just a tiny amount, taints all of it. Uncle Ally called it dirty money, like a drop of urine in clean water.

But who is paying for that crime? While we, my *appa* and *amma*, and five thousand others are suffering in jail, the real criminals are living in luxury."

While talking Valliamma burst into a coughing fit, her hands pressed to her chest and her legs buckling under her. She quickly straightened up, then wheezed, "How God punishes them is His business. I intend to break their power and see justice being done long before God decides to find the time to make them pay for their sins! And I'll do it Gandhiji's way – I will not spill a drop of blood - ours or the exploiter's as I achieve

my aim."

Valliamma affirmed she was not angry but was just saddened that they were abused by people they had never harmed. They were in this hell-hole, because they refused to be treated like dogs with no rights. It is not hatred but demanding their God - given rights that she was fighting for.

P K made a proposal that he would approach the authorities to release her as she needed medical treatment. She could come back after the treatment was over. Valliamma strongly protested against this suggestion.

"I am here as a political prisoner, for protesting against their laws. Will they repeal their laws?

.....Should I come back, for crimes that the rest of the world thinks I am innocent of?'

If they release me, they must admit I am guilty of nothing."

I will sit right here, I refuse to be released for medical grounds !"

To be continued..



## Insightful visit for community college students



22 students from Mahakavi Bharathiyar Community College in Sunguvarchatram had an insightful industrial visit to Balaji Garments in Kundrathur.

They learned dress stitching intricacies, creating patterns, and witnessed warehouse procedures. This hands-on experience provided a comprehensive understanding of garment production,

impacting their budding careers significantly.

The visit proved invaluable, equipping these learners with practical knowledge and skills for their future in the fashion and garment industry.

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