



Festival of Lights celebrated across centres

Kasuva, Tiruvallur



From L to R : Sevalaya Murali, Bhuvaneswari Muralidharan, Bhagath, G Hariharan, Prakash Rangaraj, Anuj Kumar and Prince Raj with Sevalaya residents.

Prakash Rangaraj, Vice President, HDFC Bank was the Chief Guest at the Deepavali celebrations at the Kasuva centre on 18 Oct 2025.

Addressing the students, he shared five guiding principles for life: pursue excellence in education, maintain discipline in everything you do, support each other during ups and downs, choose the right goals and work diligently towards them, and once you succeed, give back to society. He praised the consistent efforts of Sevalaya Murali, his wife, and the staff who have been contributing to community development for the past 38 years, and assured his continued support for Sevalaya's initiatives.

Anuj Kumar and Prince Raj, from Bihar and Jharkhand, who are currently pursuing law degrees in Chennai, also attended the event. Drawing from their own experiences, they shared that, "If one aims high and works hard, support will always come to help achieve their dreams". They motivated the students to



make the best use of the opportunities provided by Sevalaya, strive for success, and give back to society.

The monthly manuscript magazine 'Vidiyal', prepared by students under the guidance of teachers, was released during the event. Hostel students and resident elders received new dresses for Deepavali, and everyone joined in bursting crackers and spreading festive cheer.

Heartwarming Gesture of Bhagath



The highlight of the celebration was the heartwarming gesture of Bhagath, a Std XII student from Sevalaya's Children's Home, who represented Tiruvallur District in the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Trophy Basketball Games.

He donated his entire prize money of ₹50,000 to Sevalaya. Bhagath, who lost his parents and has been staying at Sevalaya for the past eight years, has been trained in basketball since Std IV. His act of generosity, despite his humble background, was widely appreciated.

Nallampalli, Dharmapuri



K S Sulochana, Donor, Sevalaya, R Raman, Head, Uthavum Uravugal, Athiyamankottai and Members from Kakkan Youth Club were the Chief Guests at Sevalaya's V T Shanthi Memorial Senior Citizens' Home.

Thalavaipalayam, Thanjavur



Lion Er S Manoj, Proprietor, Gray Home Construction, Thanjavur, was the Chief Guest at Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Krishnan Memorial Free Senior Citizens' Home.

Zamin Endathur, Chengalpattu



M Raja and M Udhaya, Proprietors, Raja Textiles, Madhuranthagam, were the Chief Guests at Sevalaya's Janaki Ammal Vijayaraghavachariar Memorial Senior Citizens' Home.

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Alumni Gift for Deepavali



Alumni contributions for Deepavali 2025-26 totalled ₹1,23,900 from 115 students, along with firecrackers, sarees for grandmothers, and sweets. On seeing a donation request in the alumni group, students promptly shared their contributions online.

G Hariharan, a 2022-23 alumnus, now

studying Physician Assistant Course at Vels Medical College, motivated his friends to contribute.

A group of 10 friends donated 20 sarees, sweets, and ₹2,200 in cash to the elderly, toured the campus, and pledged to support Sevalaya further by organising meals and events.

Self Development programme for Sevalaya staff at RK Math, Thanjavur



The Village Development Centre of Ramakrishna Math, Thanjavur conducted a two-day programme titled '*Sevaiyaatruvorukku Sevai*' (சேவையாற்றுவோருக்கு சேவை) for Sevalaya employees on 4 and 5 Oct 2025. The aim of the programme was to promote motivation and engagement through self-improvement sessions, yoga, and team-building activities.

A total of 44 Sevalaya staff members participated in the residential programme. Swami Vimurtananda, Head, Ramakrishna Math, Thanjavur, presided over the event.

The two-day retreat at Thanjavur began with a sacred bath in the River Kaveri, followed by yoga and soulful patriotic and spiritual songs by the Vishnampettai Sisters. Sevalaya Murali, delivered the inaugural address, while staff members

S Bhuvaneshwari, M Shalini, and M T Anandan shared reflections on their pride in serving Sevalaya. Ramanathan, Deputy Head, *Ennangalin Sangamam*, an NGO, delivered a motivational speech.

Interactive sessions explored Sevalaya's social role, motivation in service, and leadership values. Swami Vimurtananda inspired the participants to lead with purpose, cultivate curiosity, and work with mission-driven zeal. The day concluded with an awareness video, *satsang*, a lecture, *aradhana*, sports, and a walk through *Saradha Vanam*.

Day two featured *aradhana*, yoga, and meditation, followed by a lecture by Dr L S Sathyamurthy, District Judge, Mayiladuthurai on "Vivekananda – The Diamond in the Golden Crown of Service." Swami Vimurtananda emphasised

wholehearted service, patience, and mindfulness through anecdotes from the lives of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

Dr Kalaimagal, Naturopathy Practitioner conducted a session on health which focused on mindful eating and nutrition, and the programme concluded with prayers, *pushpanjali*, and an address by Kowdasi Karunamoorthi. Swami Vimurtananda presented *Enadhu Bharatham*, *Amara Bharatham* to Sevalaya staff, encouraging regular reading. The two-day programme was coordinated by volunteer Bhanu Niveditha from Ramakrishna Math, Thanjavur.



Sivasankari's Gift to Sevalaya



On her 83rd birthday, renowned Tamil writer and social activist Sivasankari marked the occasion in a unique way, turning it into a celebration of giving. She donated ₹5 lakhs to Sevalaya to support its charitable activities, and the donation was received by Sevalaya Murali, Founder & Managing Trustee, and Bhuvaneshwari Muralidharan, Honorary Correspondent of Sevalaya. In total, Sivasankari donated ₹3 crores to various organisations on her birthday.

Sundram Fasteners gifts to montessori kids



As part of *Daan Utsav* - Joy of Giving Week, 25 staff members from Sundram Fasteners distributed gifts, including remote control cars, teddy bears, Barbie

dolls, and toy vehicles, to 280 Montessori children at Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre, on 11 Oct 2025.

Joy of Giving Week



Kasuva, Tiruvallur – 17 Oct 2025

4 staff members from Maharishi International Residential School, Sunguvarchatram, donated stationery and provisions to support rural children.

A team of 70 students and 13 staff from K Balaguruva Chettiar Son Vivekananda Vidyalaya, Veerapuram, also visited and



contributed stationery and provisions.

Additionally, 15 students and 2 staff from Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Senior Secondary School, Siruseri, donated stationery and provisions, and spent time interacting with the senior citizens at the centre.

Sri Sathya Sai Prema Rath welcomed at Sevalaya



The Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Tamil Nadu, celebrated the centenary of Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba with the Sri Sathya Sai Prema Rath, a devotional procession honouring his spiritual and social contributions. The chariot was warmly received at Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre on 10 October 2025 with *Poorna Kumbam* and cultural performances.

Sri Upendra, Chartered Accountant and alumnus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute

of Higher Learning, highlighted Baba's motto, "Love everyone, Serve everyone," and His contributions to education, healthcare, and water projects.

M Gopal, President of Thiruvallur District Samithi, spoke on the values of patience, devotion, and discipline.

R Sairam, President of Velachery Samithi, emphasised the values of love, devotion, and service preached by Baba. Sevalaya Murali reflected on Baba's life, stressing that service to God is incomplete without serving humanity. The event included prayers, bhajans, a video on Baba's life, and prasad distribution. Volunteers from Thiruninravur, Thiruvallur, Velachery, and Besant Nagar Samithis participated.

The lunch for 3,000 people served at Sevalaya was sponsored by the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation.

EXL team makes 800 seedballs



On 24 Sep 2025, Sevalaya organised a seedball-making activity for EXL employees in Chennai.

80 staff members participated and made 800 seedballs. The activity was coordinated by S C Suresh, Project Coordinator, Sevalaya.

BSNL pensioners gift cheer



On 9 Oct 2025, BSNL Staff Pensioners, through their "Helping Hearts" initiative, visited Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Memorial Free Old Age Home, Thanjavur.

They distributed sweets and dresses, bringing smiles and festive cheer to the residents.

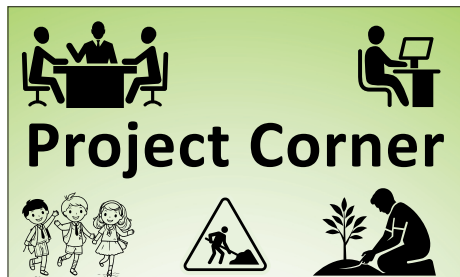
Ongoing Projects 2025-26



KONE sponsors 150 students of Std IX and XII under the 2025–2026 education support project.



Unipres India Pvt. Ltd. conducts Bhoomi Pooja on 3 Sep 2025 at Vadakupattu village to construct 4 bus stops, benefiting 5,000 people.



Apollo Tyres Ltd has transformed lives by building 30 toilets in Tada, Andhra Pradesh, and providing digital literacy to 400+ students in Kancheepuram. Students are exploring computers and building skills for a brighter future. Total Project Worth: ₹39.12 lakhs

[Watch the Impact :](https://youtu.be/l8YsUrKVivw?si=5A9YoMPLfOpFaIVy)
<https://youtu.be/l8YsUrKVivw?si=5A9YoMPLfOpFaIVy>

LatentView Analytics leaders visit Sevalaya



Dipali Sheth, Independent Director at LatentView Analytics Ltd., visited Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre on 13 Sep 2025. She observed the career guidance sessions for students of Stds X, XI, and XII and interacted with former students pursuing higher education. She was accompanied by Remadevi Thottathil, Chief Human Resources Officer, Mariam Alex, Senior Executive - CSR & ESG, Poornima Shankar, Associate Director - Lead Facilities, Sustainability & CSR, Bennyhin T, Executive - CSR &

Sustainability and other officials from LatentView Analytics Ltd.



Celebrating the 156th Gandhi Jayanthi

Kasuva, Tiruvallur



Dr Ushaa Eswaran, Principal, Mahalakshmi Tech Campus, Chrompet, was the Chief Guest at the Gandhi Jayanti 2025 celebrations held at Sevalaya's Kasuva centre on 2 Oct 2025. She paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi by garlanding his portrait. In her address, Dr Ushaa emphasised the importance of honesty, acting according to one's conscience, responsibility, and continuous effort, highlighting that virtue and service extend beyond one's lifetime. She encouraged students to cultivate the habit of reading books and draw inspiration from Gandhiji's life, teachings, and values. Earlier, essay, quiz, and painting competitions were conducted online in remembrance of Mahatma Gandhi, with participation from 932 students across 11 districts.

Prizes were awarded to 10 winners from Tiruvallur district, and a total of 31

winners were recognized across Sevalaya branches, while certificates for other participants were sent digitally.

Thalavaipalayam, Thanjavur



R T Latha, District Welfare Officer, Thanjavur, was the Chief Guest at Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Krishnan Memorial Free Senior Citizens' Home on the International Day of Older Persons.

Elder's at TN Government celebration



On the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons, the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, organised a

Students qualify for 'National' basketball



The Intra Hi 5 Regional Basketball Tournament (Tamil Nadu & Andhra Pradesh) was held from 28 - 30 Sep 2025 at Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre. 100 players - 40 boys from 4 teams and 60 girls from 6 teams - competed in Under-14 and Under-17 categories.

Sevalaya's teams won in Under-14 Boys and Girls and Under-17 Boys, qualifying for the Intra Hi 5 Nationals in Dec 2025 at Hyderabad.

Hi5 Youth Foundation, Mumbai, sponsors basketball gear and coaching for 260+ students of Sevalaya.



special event to honour senior citizens at CM Palace, Manavalanagar, on 14 Oct 2025.

A total of 16 elders from Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre were invited to participate in the celebrations. M Prathap, IAS, District Collector of Tiruvallur, along with his team, hosted the event and arranged a delicious dinner for the guests. Each elder received a gift bag containing a medical kit, steel water bottle, kerchief, scarf, and towel as a token of appreciation.

The event also featured informative sessions on healthy food habits and various government welfare schemes for senior citizens, promoting awareness, well-being, and an enhanced quality of life among the elderly community.

Ayudha Pooja, Saraswathi Pooja and Vijayadasami Celebrations

Thalavaipalayam, Thanjavur



Ln Er K Tamilzharasan, President, Ln S Visveswaran, Secretary, Ln S Venkatesan, Treasurer, District Chair Persons, and Members of Ancient City Lions Club,

Madhuranthagam were the Chief Guests at Sevalaya's Janaki Ammal Vijayaraghavachariar Memorial Senior Citizens' Home.

Zamin Endathur, Chengalpattu



M Thiruneelakandan, Deputy Director, MY Bharat Kendra, Thanjavur, was the Chief Guest at Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Krishnan Memorial Free Senior Citizens' Home.

Navaratri celebrations



Navaratri was celebrated at Sevalaya's Kasuva centre on 1 Oct 2025. Sridevi Sudhakar, Proprietor of Ganesha Gas Agency, Mogappair, was the Chief Guest. Sridevi Sudhakar said she will support Sevalaya, proudly following her father's example of helping others. She encouraged the students to study well and achieve greater success in life. She also donated ₹5,000, the amount saved by her children, to Sevalaya. During the Navaratri festival, various Golu dolls are beautifully decorated, and daily poojas are performed as part of the celebrations.

Eye camp at Thanjavur home



Sasikala Mohanraj, Proprietor of GK Foods, Mayiladuthurai, was the Chief Guest at Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Krishnan Memorial Free

Senior Citizen's Home, Thanjavur, for Navaratri celebrations on 26 Sep 2025. She conveyed her greetings and appreciated the Golu display. A free eye camp, supported by Maxivision Super Speciality Eye Hospitals and Lions Club of Thanjavur AMC Alumni, benefitted around 60 people. Lions Club will sponsor eye surgeries, and Maxivision offered discounts on spectacles.



Golu at donor's home

On Golu Pooja, 38 residents from Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre visited the house of Nandhini Venkatesh, a long-time donor. The students admired the Golu decorations, and Nandhini distributed stationery kits, making the celebration joyful and memorable.



BNY volunteers take kids to Guindy park picnic



35 Volunteers from BNY Mellon took 82 Std I students from Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre on a trip to Guindy National Park, on 20 Sep 2025. The children enjoyed the play area, mini zoo, reptile house, and bird aviary. BNY sponsored food and transport, making the outing joyful and memorable.



A Different Kind of Auditor

"An average student, but exceptionally creative", by his own description, Balaji M Athreya was a high energy kid and multi-talented. A student of Chinmaya Vidyalaya School, Kilpauk, he was into painting, arts and sports winning in many interschool contests. He was the school cricket captain and by a whisker, missed attending the Republic Day parade in Delhi, after going through five rigorous camps on his way to becoming a Company Sergeant Major (CSM) representing the Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andaman & Nicobar contingent.

Hailing from a humble Tamil family, Athreya - as he's more popularly called, was born in Tirupati on 2 Mar 1982, to Muralidharan and Uma, and raised in Chennai. He has an elder brother Rajesh. His hero from childhood to this day is Lord Shri Hanuman and he's inspired by the works of Shri Yogananda, and his favourite sportsmen are Rahul Dravid (cricket) and Rafael Nadal (tennis).

Following conventional advice, he joined the CA course in India while pursuing a B.Com at D G Vaishnav College. Soon, he realised his aspirations were more



global. Wriggling out of a ₹485 monthly articleship stipend, he shifted focus to public accounting and identified the US Certified Public Accountant (CPA) qualification as a better match.

In 2011, Deloitte sponsored his initial US CPA exam trip, but his final attempt in 2013 required about USD 3,000 - far beyond his minimal savings while raising a young family in Hyderabad. Taking a personal loan, despite his wife's concerns, he saw it as an investment in long-term benefits. In May 2013, he proudly earned the CPA designation, leading to a role with Grant Thornton in Chicago, USA. In 2020, he added Canadian CPA to his credentials.

Career milestones include two years at EY in Bangalore, setting up KPMG's Audit Quality practice in Bahrain, and joining KPMG Global in 2022. His journey has

taken him through Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chicago, Bahrain, and now Toronto, Canada.

Entrepreneurial at heart, Athreya founded Audimatiq Consulting, Inc., helping CPA/CA firms design effective quality management systems with innovative technology. He partners with CPA Ontario to develop Canadian CPA learning content and with Simandhar Education as CPA audit faculty, while authoring thought leadership.

Married to Preetha, they have two sons - Vishvareth, a passionate tennis player, and Trayaksh, an exceptional Lego builder. Chess is a family favourite, often sparking playful debates over the best player.

Athreya first connected with Murali via LinkedIn and was inspired by his bold decision to leave a successful corporate career for social entrepreneurship, fully dedicated to Sevalaya's vision. Calling it "a leap of faith" and "an act of God," Athreya admired the selflessness behind Murali's work. Determined to lead by example for his sons, he began contributing to Sevalaya monthly, believing that generosity should become a habit before success brings ego or complacency. Sevalaya often features in their family conversations, shaping values as he and his wife Preetha look ahead to their later years.

Guided by his favourite Sanskrit quotes - "As you think, so you become" and "Let noble thoughts come to us from everywhere" - the Athreya family plans to visit Sevalaya's Chennai campus in August 2026.

Meet Volunteer Deetchana



M Deetchana, a volunteer at Sevalaya, completed her one-month volunteering journey from 5 May to 12 June 2025. Her father, P Murugan, a Sub-Inspector in the Muthapudupet area, often found and helped abandoned senior citizens in the Tiruvallur district. He became familiar with Sevalaya NGO as it comes under his station limit. He already knew about the NGO while he was working in Vengalimit and would regularly reach out to the organisation for sheltering those elders.

It was during a casual father-daughter conversation that Deetchana expressed her desire to volunteer, and instantly, her father suggested Sevalaya.

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Her true inspiration to pursue social work, however, began in her college environment at the Madras School of Social Work. Interacting with students from other departments exposed her to the various dimensions of the field. Attending a conference at NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences) further introduced her to community development initiatives and the impactful role of social workers, which deeply inspired her to explore this profession with purpose.

Her mother, Manimegalai, runs a franchise business of a fast food shop at Tiruvallur. Deetchana studied Std X

at SRMJV School, and completed Std XI and XII at Sri Niketan Higher Secondary School, Tiruvallur. She pursued her undergraduate degree in Psychology at the Madras School of Social Work, where she is currently in her II year of postgraduation in Social Work.

Her volunteering journey began with an introduction to the campus and overall functioning of Sevalaya through an orientation video and a campus visit. She initially assisted with data entry at Sevalaya's medical centre - entering patient data from health camps. Soon after, she started engaging deeply with students at the hostel, conducting

psychology-based activities that helped them explore their goals, overcome fears, build self-esteem, and reflect on their strengths. She also facilitated interactive sessions for senior citizens, including brain games like puzzles and spot-the-difference activities, bringing joy and mental stimulation to their daily lives.

Her hobbies include drawing, painting, engaging in craft works, organising things, and reading books. She is passionate about contributing towards women empowerment and aims to create a positive impact by making a meaningful difference in the lives of women through her future social work journey.

Motivational session by industry leader



On 11 Oct 2025, Vijayapriya Prakash, Founder of *Theervai Nokki* and Senior Director at Cognizant, conducted a motivational session for 150 Std XII students at Sevalaya's Kasuva Centre.

The session aimed to inspire students to gain real-life experiences and understand the difference between finding out and figuring out solutions.

The session included engaging videos like Introducing the Air Taxi and The

Power of Technology, and discussions on innovation, infrastructure, and strategies for success.

The session was coordinated by Amuthavalli Narayanan, a long-term

donor of Sevalaya.

Theervai Nokki, is a social venture using innovative methods like storytelling to teach science and aeronautics to child.

Thanjavur college students bring cheer to Sevalaya's Seniors



On 5 Oct 2025, 6 students from Kunthavai Naacchiyaar Government Arts College for Women visited Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Krishnan Memorial Free Old Age Home,

sharing stories, performing dances, and donating 10 kg of rice, filling the day with warmth and joy for the residents.



Senior citizens enjoy temple visit



19 residents of Sevalaya's VT Shanthi Memorial Senior Citizens Home, Dharmapuri, visited Shree Kaliamma, Muneeswaran, Shree Venkata Perumal, and Sivan temples, on 22 Sep 2025.

The trip, including meals, was sponsored by donor Ashish Kataria, who also supports the home's operations.

Gandhi Jayanti speech winners

On 1 Oct 2025, the Department of School Education, and Directorate of Public Libraries Tamil Nadu, held a speech competition for school Children on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanthi, at Anna Centenary Library on the topic "Gandhiji's Ahimsa." Among 12 Sevalaya students from Kasuva Centre, M Kaviya of Std VIII won the I prize, and P Rithika of Std III secured III prize.



Musical joy at Old age home



Thanjai Jeevan Sruthi performed an orchestra at Sevalaya's Gandhi Ashram Krishnan Free Old Age Home, Thanjavur, on 5 Oct 2025. They sang devotional and film songs, encouraged residents to join in, and created memorable moments. The event was organised by V Malathy, PRO, Thanjavur AMC LIONS CLUB - 324F District

Mahadev Desai - 26

(Source: "The Fire and the Rose" by Narayan Desai)

On his way back from England to India, Gandhiji decided to go via Switzerland, though it meant delay in reaching India. This was particularly for the purpose of meeting Romain Rolland whom Gandhiji considered as a saint. For Mahadev, it was a unique opportunity to witness the meeting of two ascetics – one from the East and the other from the West. Romain Rolland was living in a small village in Switzerland, named Villeneuve. It was on 6th December 1931, the historic meet took place at the village.

Mahadev wrote: "Thus, on the very first day, opening up his heart, pushing back his chair, Rolland took Gandhiji's hands in his own hands and keenly gazed at him, like a lover gazing at a long-lost beloved." Romain Rolland's sister Madeleine acted as the interpreter. She said, "We never thought that such a day will come. We often feared that would we have to leave this world without meeting you?"

Romain Rolland's entry in his diary of 9th December gives a fairly good description of Rolland's impression on Mahadev.

"In the evening, I had another

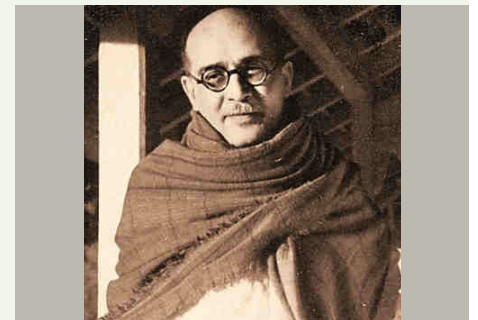
conversation, short but pleasant, with Gandhiji's first Secretary Mahadev Desai, a handsome Indian, 35 to 40, tall, well-built with an intelligent face. My sister has had longer conversations with him, and I know that he left his career as a lawyer to devote himself entirely to Gandhiji, which brought him a never-failing happiness. But I do know from Mira, and he tells me himself this evening, that my writings and thoughts have their place in his life. He was delighted when Mira came to the Ashram, as they would talk together about me, and Desai asked Mira to teach him French, so that he could read my words in the original. But when Gandhiji heard about it, he reproached both of them severely, saying quite rightly, that at a time like the present, they should not be reading works of art, but devoting themselves entirely to the cause of India.

This did not stop Desai from continuing his studies, as he tells me, he now knows enough French to realise how often the English translations are unfaithful to my text. He asks me to give Jean Christophe in French, as well as my Vie de Tolstoi; he hopes that he will soon be sent to prison,

back in India, which will give him time to read my books. The emotion in his eyes and his Indian gesture of devotion tells me of the affectionate gratitude he feels towards me. He and Pyarelal have been longing for this meeting for years, twice already it should have happened and it fell through; he says that it feels now like a dream. Everyone works to exhaustion in Gandhi's circle. When the master himself has gone to bed, Desai and Pyarelal very often stay up late at night making fair copies of notes taken during the day.

Desai has the job of editing them for publication in Young India."

To be continued....



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