



# ELDERS' VOICE

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY

News Bulletin of

Senior Citizens' Forum Kottayam

Editor

Pushpa Mathew

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## President's Message

Dhanya Gopinath

The fury of the monsoon was felt this year also. This time, we hear of the distress caused by water in the northern states of India. Climate change is impacting every region of India.

Very soon India will be celebrating its 77<sup>th</sup> Independence day. Every year the national flag is unfurled at both public & private institutions without fail. Over the years, the 15<sup>th</sup> of August has started meaning different things to different people. For some it is just a national holiday when they can relax at home, for others it is a true bench mark of achieving national freedom.

In the years following independence, a lot of literary & artistic creations describing the human cost of partition, were produced. Books like "Midnight's Children" & "Freedom at Midnight" came to be written. While the first book was written by Salman Rushdie, Freedom at Midnight was written by Larry Collins & Dominique Lapierre. The duo have chronicled events surrounding the first Independence Day celebrations in 1947.

Now a days schools all over India come up with interesting activities for children like art and craft activities, drawing and painting competitions, group reading history story books etc. These are all done after hoisting the tricolor which is the first and foremost activity that is done in any educational institution. After that, when all children join together to sing the national anthem, it helps trigger the patriotic spirit among kids.

There are flag hoisting ceremonies & cultural programmes in government & non-governmental institutions. Over a period of time, the celebration has changed emphasis from nationalism to a broader celebration of all things Indian. All these things do help generate a feeling of pride & nation hood in our young citizens.



Along with celebrations during Independence Day, it would not be out of place to talk about our freedom warriors who made great sacrifices to make India an independent nation.

Our nation has a great history and has produced towering personalities. It is these freedom fighters who have helped us enjoy the India we are currently living in.

We immediately think of leaders who achieved national prominence like Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhai Patel, Netaji Subash Chandra Bose, Maulana Kalam Azad or A. J. John but tend to forget that every state in India has contributed to the freedom movement.

The names of eight people figure prominently in the list from Kerala. They are K. Kumar, Kuttimalu Amma, Accamma Cherian, Moha-mmad Abdur Rahi, Vakkom Maulavi, Swadeshabhi mani Ramakrishna Pillai, Vaikam Muhammad Basheer & V. K. Krishna Menon.

These leaders were arrested multiple times & spent many years of their life in jails. During the Salt (Cont. to Page 3)



Our Vice President P I Mani offering birthday felicitations to Mrs Lally Pulickan



Prof P J Kurien receiving a memento from President, Dhanya.

# Editor's Musings

Pushpa Mathew

Hello Everyone,

I am back after a month's tour of Spain and Portugal and I thank Prof. Santhakumari for having so co-operatively taken over the publication of the "Elders' Voice" in my absence.

We had gone on this tour to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, along with two other couples, who were also celebrating theirs. We three couples had started off as newly-weds in Delhi in the mid 1970s. When our kids arrived, we shared cradles, prams and baby clothes! Throughout all these years we have kept in close touch. Now the kids are all grown and settled in different parts of the globe and they encouraged us to celebrate our landmark anniversaries together. Spain and Portugal are beautiful tourist destinations, with bustling urban cities as well as historic sites and architectural buildings, dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> century – a must see destination for all.



On 23<sup>rd</sup> June, our Vice President, Mr. P. I. Mani gave a talk on "Consumer Rights in India", a topic that was of relevance to all and Mr Mani has plenty of experience in the area, as a social activist.

And on 14<sup>th</sup> July, Prof P J Kurien spoke about his recent book on Plasma-Physics. Thanks to Dr. P. I. John, a specialist in that area, most of us were quite familiar with the concept of plasma being the first of the four states of matter. Prof. Kurien mentioned how Japan and China were using plasma technology for waste management. Dr. John said that using plasma for waste management is very expensive and he went on to elaborate on a plasma gasification plant set up in GIFT city in Gujarat.

Our member, Prof (Dr) K P Joy celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on 24<sup>th</sup> May, for which he was felicitated by the Puthupally Souhruda Vedi, a picture of which is attached (on page 4).

Many of you were able to correctly identify the couple in last issue's "Guess Who?" They were our President, Dhanya and her husband Gopinath. This time we have another well-known couple from our Forum. Let's see how many can guess correctly this time.

Until next time, then.

### Guess who is this?



Answer to last month's quiz "Guess who is this?":

**M. Gopinathan and Dhanya**



P I Mani speaking on Consumer Rights on 23rd June.

# A JOURNEY TO SEE 7 SISTERS

## Part 7 (Mizoram)

Rani Mathew



**M**izoram is one of the seven sisters of Northeast India, bordered by Tripura, Assam, Manipur and also sharing international borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh: Aizawl is its capital. In 1972 it became a centrally administered union territory under the name of Mizoram and in 1987 it achieved statehood and became the 23rd state of India.

**Mizoram** is a land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes. The official Languages of the state are Mizo and English. What sets Mizoram tourism, apart from other tourist destinations is its rich tribal culture. The traditional people are skilled artisans who make bamboo products like

baskets, utensils, hats, hand-crafted furniture and flower vases as well. The state of Mizoram has some great weavers who create beautiful products.

About 60 percent of the people of the Mizoram are engaged in agricultural activities. Maize and rice are the main food crops. Cash crops are sugarcane, tapioca, ginger and cotton. Mizoram has a population of 10 lakh of which Christians constitute 87%. Hinduism is a minority faith with 2.75% of its population. There are 12 temples in Mizoram. Muslim Population is 1.35 percent.

Mizoram is among the safest states in India. Historians believe that the Mizos are a part of the great wave of the Mongolian race

spilling over into the eastern and southern India centuries ago.

The capital city Aizawl looks like Ooty or Kodaikanal but is bigger than those south Indian cities. The hilly and valley areas give beautiful views of the city. The zig zag roads around the city are planned and well maintained. There are plenty of shopping centers too.

We visited the Aizwal zoological park and the very famous Solomon's temple, constructed by Kohhran Thianghlim, a non-denominational church founded by Dr. L B Sailo in 1984. The entire construction is in white marble.

That was our last day of the 7 Sisters tour. The next day we left for Calcutta to catch the flight back to Kochi.

## President's Message

(Cont. from Page 1)

Satyagraha in 1930 at Kozhikode; K. Kumar, Muhammad Abdur Rahim & Vaikom Muham-mad Basheer were arrested. Kuttimalu Amma was part of major freedom agitations like the Swadeshi Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement & the Quit India Movement.

AccamaCherian played a major role in the Civil Disobedience Movement, When the British chief of police ordered to shoot at the rally, she is said to have asked them to shoot her first as she was their leader. On hearing

this, Mahatma Gandhi conferred the title of "The Jhansi Rani of Travancore " on her.

The independence movement helped unite all Indians irrespective of religion, caste or creed. At the stroke of midnight when Jawaharlal Nehru spoke about the tryst with destiny, Indians represented a secular front.

It is this patriotism and nationalism which must be highlighted in our independence day celebrations.

The Indian Constitution has promised to ensure the following

to all its citizens:-

- 1) Social, economic and political justice.
- 2) Thought, expression, belief, faith and worship are all protected under the Constitution.
- 3) Equality of status and opportunity, as well as the promotion of all of them.
- 4) Fraternity ensures the individual's dignity as well as the nation's unity and integrity.

Across the world & in India tolerance & pluralism are facing attacks. Working together to face the challenges of diversity is the only solution.

"SAB KE SAATH SAB KA VIKAS".  
JAI HIND

# A PROJECT FOR A FREE, PROSPEROUS AND VIRTUOUS KERALA (Cont. from July Issue)



**Prof. BABU JOSEPH**

7. Although Kerala has a high level of health in terms of low birth, death and infant mortality rates, we have the highest suicide rate, higher registered crime rate and higher prevalence of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, alcoholism, abortion etc. Prevalence of consumption of drugs is also high causing the "Low Mortality, High Morbidity" syndrome.
8. As against the all-India level of 13 persons per lakh, in Kerala about 33 persons per lakh commit suicide every day.
9. Kerala also has the highest registered crime rate-306.1 crimes per 1000 people per annum as against the national average of 176.7 per 1000 per annum.
10. There are lakhs of cases pending for years in our courts and the number of crimes against women has risen manifold. Kerala consumes 3 times the national average of liquor and taxes from liquor is the major source of income for the state.
11. Entrepreneurship is neither encouraged nor allowed to grow, thanks to the local business environment. As a result of this, many successful

- entrepreneurs are shifting to neighboring states.
12. The rhythm of education is upset by frequent holidays and tourists and others get stranded at railway stations and airports due to hartals and bandhs.
13. Compared to other Indian states, Kerala has a polyglot society, wherein all major religions enjoy communal harmony and social peace though of late, political killings is rearing its ugly head in Kannur and Maradu areas.
14. Alarming deforestation and accumulation of untreated garbage are having disastrous consequences on the environment and public health.
15. Politics in the state and governmental power keeps alternating with very little change in the policies and programs between the Congress-led UDF and the Communist-led LDF. In the last elections, the LDF upset the political balance by getting more than 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the total seats, which is not good for the democratic process in the state. If the present slide continues, Kerala may follow the one-party dictatorship of

the Marxist party in West Bengal.

The genesis of the present day problems can be seen in

1. A steady fall in spiritual and moral values in all walks of life.
2. An all-pervasive government system, in which fundamental freedoms and all kinds of human creativity are stymied and throttled.
3. The emergence of political leaders, irrespective of party affiliation, whose only motivation seems to be clinging on to power to serve their own private ends rather than public good.

**WISH YOU ALL  
A VERY  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

*May your birthday and every day ahead be filled with the warmth of love, the joy of good health and blessings in abundance!*



<b>John Joseph Kattoor</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Aug.</b>
<b>Dr. M. Joseph Cherian</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Aug.</b>
<b>Prof. Babu Joseph</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Aug.</b>
<b>A. M. Mathew</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Aug.</b>
<b>M. Gopinathan</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> Aug.</b>



Felicitation of Prof. (Dr.) K. P. Joy by the Puthupally Souhruda Vedi