



# ELDERS' VOICE

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY

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*News Bulletin of*  
Senior Citizens' Forum Kottayam

*Editor*  
Pushpa Mathew



## President's Message

Dr. Joseph Cherian

Let me begin by wishing all of you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2023! I am happy to be back after an eventful trip to the US and look forward to meeting all of you at the forthcoming meeting of the Forum.

The World Cup furore has died down. While enjoying the games, I could not but be impressed by the role technology played in making this world cup event so memorable. The balls used in the matches have an internal motion sensor capable of reporting the precise location data at the moment the ball is kicked. The information goes to a data analysis centre, where the officials can use it for various purposes. The ball used in the game is made by Adidas and is named Al Rihla, which means 'the journey'. It has been designed to 'float longer and spin more' which seemed to have affected the player's performance.

A semi-automated offside technology, which used a dozen tracking cameras mounted underneath the roof of the stadium provided more accurate and faster decisions. Cameras track the ball and plot up to 29 data points of each individual player at a rate of 50 times per second. These data points help to calculate the exact position of both the ball and the player on the field to enable correct decision on marking the offside.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations Organization has declared 2023 as the 'International Year of Millets'. Prime Minister Modi's message read during the opening ceremony, thanked the global community for supporting India's proposal to mark the year as the International Year of Millets (IYM). The letter recalled the benefits of



Millets for the consumer, cultivator and climate. Millets are nutritious and are suitable for cultivation in semi-arid regions. They need less water than other grains during their growth. Millets make less demand on the land and provide diversity to our food habits. There is necessity to raise awareness to create 'Millet Mindfulness' as an important objective of this movement.

The much-awaited Kochi Muziris Biennale 2022-2023 is back. A biennial international contemporary art exhibition that has caught international attention shall run from late December to April next year. The art lovers among us shall be able to get immersed in modern art forms from Indian and International artists portrayed through various mediums like contemporary art paintings, sculptures, installations and more.

The Fifth Edition of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale is being curated by Singapore-based Indian visual artist Shubigi Rao. She said:

'At the heart of my curatorial adventure lies a desire for liberation and comradeship where the possibilities for a non-alienated life could spill into a politics of friendship, where pleasure and pedagogy could sit together and share a drink, and where we could dance and sing and celebrate a dream together.'

Have a wonderful 2023!

# Editor's Musings

Pushpa Mathew

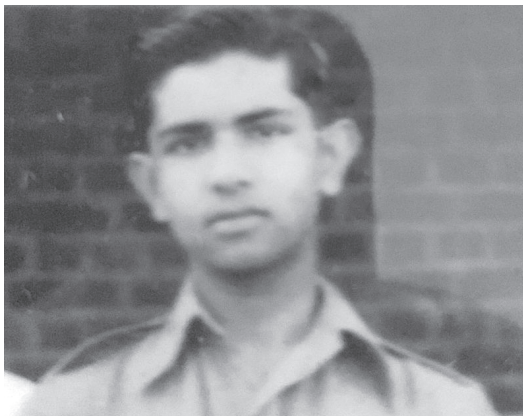
Hello Everyone,

As the sun sets on another year, may it rise today to shine light on new opportunities in the next new chapter of our lives. So cheers to a new year but with the same old friends. After all, friends are the family we choose for ourselves!

At the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November, we had our member Prof Jacob George speaking on the Japanese concept of "Ikigai". We had a detailed article on the topic by our Asstt Editor, Prof Santhakumari in our Dec issue too, which has been much appreciated, as is evident from the Letters to the Editor.

In the Dec issue we had an introductory article by another first-time contributor, Mrs. Rani Mathew, on her visit to the North East. She'll write more articles on each of the seven states of the North East and we'll carry it in our issues from February 2023. There has also been a suggestion that she give a talk on her visit to the "Seven Sisters".

## Guess who is this?



This time we have New Year messages by two of our eminent members - one from Dr. P I John, where he has dwelt on his experience at the SCF and how telecommunication has touched our lives. As technology- driven as he has always been.



The other message by Rev Koshy Mathews, touches on how New Year resolutions can give meaning to our lives and beckon us forward as individuals and as a community.

At our SCF meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> Dec, we had discussions on various topics, especially planning for our Christmas and New Year get together on 6<sup>th</sup> Jan. As the fourth Friday of Dec (23<sup>rd</sup> Dec) was too close to Christmas and most members were busy on that day, it was decided that the next meeting would be on 6<sup>th</sup> Jan, when we would have a programme with carols, skits, jokes etc. followed by a sumptuous dinner.

We have a Letter to the Editor from Mr. Gopinathan, which is given below. We also have a letter from Mr. Kesavalier appreciating the felicitation given to our nonagenarians.

We also have another "Guess who?" Did you guess the couple in our last issue? It was Mr. K I Philip and Dr. Mrs. Elizabeth Philip, the nightingale, who often leads our prayer song.

Let me wind up with a quote for the New Year from Albert Einstein, "Learn from yesterday, live for today and hope for tomorrow".

Until next time, then.

Answer to last month's quiz "Guess who is this?":  
**Mr. K. I. Philip and Dr. Mrs. Elizabeth Philip**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I liked both the articles written by our first-time contributors. The Editor should be delighted to have found members who can contribute to make the Elders' Voice more meaningful.

The article on 'IKIGAI' by Prof. Shanta Kumari is written in simple & understandable prose.

As I understand, Ikigai is a concept which could be used to remain useful to oneself & the society till the very end. Perhaps Ikigai is the secret of Japanese longevity.

In fact, I feel that one of Mrs. Shanta Kumari's Ikigai is writing useful & meaningful articles.

Mrs. Rani Mathew's article on her trip to the 'Seven Sisters' makes us eager to see her next one in the January issue of the Elders' Voice.

A talk by Mrs.Mathew on her visit to the Seven Sisters would also be welcome.

**Gopinathan**

My dear friends, I wish to express my sincere thanks to SCF for honouring me along with Prof. T. M Phillip and Mr. P. K. Philipose in our last meeting. It was a great gesture and made me feel so happy and privileged. The memories of this will be long cherished. I shared a few photos of the function with my close family members and they were all so overwhelmed. Let's keep our friendship growing.

"Best regards,"

**Kesava Iyer**

# NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Rev Koshy Mathews



**G**reetings! Celebrating the turn of the year is a global phenomenon. It is fun to watch live on TV people from different time zones around the globe, celebrate the arrival of the New Year as it happens. Being secular, it probably is the only event that the whole world takes part in celebrating. Though much of what we do is trite and banal, it is one celebration we all have in common. I enjoy calling friends and family to wish them a 'Happy New Year' before going to bed late. Another ritual I enjoy privately is making New Year's resolutions. It is a far more meaningful activity that is increasingly becoming a popular tradition, especially among the young. Some seek new directions and pathways to go forward to achieve the goals they set for

themselves. For many, including organizations, New Year is an opportune time to freshen up and begin again. Indeed, it is an appropriate time to reflect on the previous year, its successes and failures, and then to make specific resolutions for the year ahead.

What awaits us this New Year is our world at a crossroads. When the path forward is unclear and the future is uncertain, a compass can help us orient ourselves and chart our course forward. There is a story told about the French Philosopher Albert Camus. During the Nazi regime in France, one day, while walking lost in the thought of formulating ideas for a book, he bumped right into a six-foot-six-inch tall and husky army general in the city park, completely unaware. The general angrily asked, "Young man, do you know where you are going?" It was a eureka moment for Camus. The general's question provided the answer he was in search of. What are our deepest purposes that give meaning to our life and beckon us forward as individuals and as a community? Without such a purpose or goal, one would languish in mediocrity or sheer absurdity. In our interconnected

and interdependent world, we need to know where we come from and what paths to take to live a meaningful and purposeful life. One way to chart this course into the future is by creating a compass for ourselves. It helps us to reassess our particular location and re-evaluate our unique gifts and collective resources, which, when we offer, could meet the world's deepest needs and feed its hunger.

Beneath the superficiality and banality of our New Year celebrations, there lies something deeper and profound, our shared humanity. We are all inextricably connected by a power greater than all of us. The glue that binds us to each other is the power of love and compassion. However, the world that awaits us this New Year is far from recognizing this reality. This is where we, as individuals, and organizations such as the Senior Citizens' Forum that we belong to, can resolve to get involved and become activists in making our world a little better than when we found it first.

Happy New Year!





# NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Dr. P I John

It is a decade since my wife and I joined the Senior Citizens' Forum. When we returned to Kottayam after an absence of almost fifty years, an important task was to revive old contacts and make new connections. The Forum helped us in this beyond our expectations with its fortnightly meetings, inspiring talks, exchange of news among the peers and the delicious feast became an addiction. The two year disruption because of COVID was unpleasant, but we learned to cope with it by going digital.

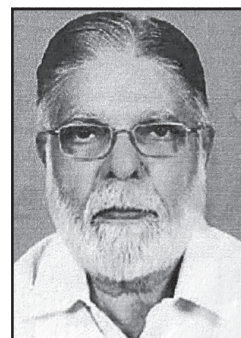
We lost some of our members in 2022. Dr Radhakrishnan, Dr. K P George and Prof George Koshy. We can only hope that they have gone to a better place. The concern that the long period of inaction would trigger a slow death of the Forum was misplaced, as we soon found when we reassembled in the familiar SEERI Hall with renewed enthusiasm and spirits. The drive to add new members also appears to be progressing.

This is the time of the year

when we get apprehensive about what is in stock for us in 2023. I belong to a generation which remembers being dazzled by the technology of the radio. From then to the present, it has been a journey of recurring change, driven by technology. We have entered a period when technology is the dominant vector of change- driving social, political and economic transformations.

Google CEO SundarPichai qualifies Artificial Intelligence as "more significant than fire or electricity" in terms of its potential impact on human civilization. New AI-enabled products and services which improve the quality of our lives continuously appear. I wrote this message using an app on my iPhone which converts spoken words into text. AI can now produce works of art, music and literature.

By altering material properties at a nano-level, we can endow materials with novel features, such as self-healing paints and water-repellent clothes. New materials,



such as graphene, can lead us to new products with hitherto unknown characteristics.

Manipulation of living organisms- plants to humans- by editing the genetic information is already here thanks to innovations like CRISPR Cas9 gene editing method. This technology, which can alter the characteristic of a living organism that is inherited, can have significant benefits in healthcare.

Technology will continue to drive us towards decentralization. Ultimate control of an organization or a company will shift from single to consensus- driven multiple. New corporate entities like the decentralized autonomous organization (DAO)—which could be a company, charity, service provider, or community group—are in the offing.

5G and later 6G services won't just mean that devices will communicate more quickly than ever before. 5G enables real time transmission of information relevant to manufacturing, consumer durables and agriculture. This will lead to more reliable web-connected devices for critical procedures, such as robotic surgery.

While wishing every reader of this newsletter, a happy and prosperous 2023, I wish to remind them technology has brought irreversible and beneficial changes to our lives and that we should be thankful for it.

## 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!*



Prof. K M Varghese	10 <sup>th</sup> January
Dr. Radhakrishnan Nair	10 <sup>th</sup> January
Mr. P I Mani	16 <sup>th</sup> January
Mr. M Mathew	26 <sup>th</sup> January
Mr. Bhasi Ipe	31 <sup>st</sup> January