



# LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

Love 4 **Sevalaya's News Letter - May 2009** Serve 2 Price-Re.1

## Dear Friends,

This is the time of the year in India, when most parents feel the pressure of educational expenses for their kids. This year most of the city schools in Chennai have announced a steep increase in the school fees as they have to pay extra to the teachers, as the Government pay scales have gone up. There are hikes ranging from 50% to 100% in almost all schools. Added to this, at least two sets of uniforms have to be purchased and books and note books to be provided for. Even if there are one or two kids in a house hold, the month of May is a tough month. This adds heat to the already hot climatic conditions in India and the parents literally sweat it out.

Every parent has a dream about their child and they somehow want to earn the money required to educate their children and see them through. They struggle a lot during the month of May to make both ends meet and run the family and at the same time take the extra load of academic expenses for their kids.

The same story happens in Sevalaya too; the only difference is that it is a much larger family with 1000 kids. Like parents we also nurture a dream for each kid. Though there is no school fee, we have to run the school, paying salary for the teachers, maintaining the building, paying the utility bills etc., for the school building. We also have to organize 2000 sets of uniforms, more that 10,000 note books. Of course the school books comes free, thanks to the Government of Tamil Nadu, we still need an average of Rs 1000 per kid to get the kid ready to go to school. This multiplies to Rs 10 lakhs (USD 20,000) every year to get all 1000 children attend the school with smiling faces.

Multiplication takes it to mind boggling levels,

but fortunately we have division also. It is not that one parent has to find all this money for 1000 children. We have all of you who have been contributing whatever you can for this cause and really make it easy to face the uphill task. Normally all of you send in your cheques and cash right in time so that by first week of June, we are ready to start the school year. I am sure this year will be no different. In addition, this year, Sevalaya's educational project has been recognized by Government of India as a project under Sec 35 AC of the Indian Income tax act, so donors in India can get 100% tax rebate on the donations made. (In fact the Sevalaya's children's home expenses and expenses for construction of new school building have also been recognized under Sec 35 AC, which will give 100% tax benefit.)

By first week of May we should be getting the class 12 results and by end of May we will get the class 10 results. Like in the past we are expecting near 100% results. We will keep you posted as and when the results are out.

Thanks & Regards  
**Murali**





**BGV course inaugurated at Coimbatore Prison**

**BGV Classes at Prisons - Puzhal Prison**

On 04/04/2009, Ms. Prema Annamalai spoke on – Gandhiji - A Legend. On 11/04/2009, Ms. Vijaya spoke on Vivekananda’s foreign Trips. On 18/04/2009, Ms. B.Nirmala spoke on Bharathi’s God and on 25/04/2009, Mr. T.S.Venkataramani spoke on Gandhiji thoughts on Discipline.

**Vellore Prison**

11/04/2009 - Mr. S.Jayakumar Spoke on “Bharathi’s Fearlessness”, Mr. Srinivasan spoke on Vivekananda’s Guru Sri Ramakrishna, Ms. Girija Raghavan Vivekananda and Self confidence and Mr. T.Vipranarayanan spoke on Vivekananda & Service.

On 25/04/2009, Mr. A.Annamalai spoke on Gandhiji – Truth and Non-violence, Ms. Prema Annamalai spoke on Gandhiji’s Social Outlook, Mr. K.Mohan spoke on Gandhiji’s favourite Religious Stories and Prof. Devadatta spoke on Gandhiji’s prayer.

**Coimbatore Prison**

The 30 session course on Mahatma Gandhi, Bharathi and Swami Vivekananda was inaugurated at Coimbatore Prisons on 04/04/2009. Inaugurating the course Mr. P.Govindarajan (Superintendent, Central Jail, Coimbatore) lauded the services of Sevalaya for the underprivileged sections of the society. He appreciated Sevalaya’s initiative to take the life and message of the 3 great leaders of our Nation, Mahakavi Bharathiyar, Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda to the prison inmates. He mentioned that various programmes are being organized in the prisons to expose the inmates to new and positive thoughts which will help them to adapt a reformed way of living and join the mainstream when they enter the free world. Mr. M.Ranganathan (Managing Trustee, Mahatma Gandhi Ashram, Aanimalai), Dr. Kathiresan (Joint Secretary, TAFVA & Director, COODU, Coimbatore) and Mr. Arumugam, Exnora, Coimbatore were the chief guests. Mr. P.Selvam (Teacher, Sevalaya) talked about the Life of Vivekananda which was well received by the audience. Mr. V.Muralidharan (Founder & Managing Trustee of Sevalaya) talked about the Life of Mahakavi Bharathiyar.



**Mahavir Jayanthi Celebrations at Sevalaya**

On 04/04/2009, Mr. Anaimalai Ranganathan spoke on Gandhi’s Life, Mr. V.Muralidharan spoke on Bharathi’s Social Outlook, Mr. P. Selvam spoke on Vivekananda’s Fearlessness and Mr. S.Jayakumar on Bharathi’s Fearlessness.

On 05/04/2009, Mr. Anaimalai Ranganathan spoke on Friends of Bharathi, Mr. V. Muralidharan spoke on Gandhiji’s views on Health, Mr. P.Selvam spoke on Vivekananda’s Guru Sri Ramakrishna and Mr. S.Jayakumar spoke on Vivekananda’s Self confidence.

**Events**

On 12/04/2009, Easter was celebrated with much joy. Ms. Anusaya Ernest, Asst. Commissioner of Police, was the Chief Guest. She spoke how Jesus died on The Cross for the sins of humanity and his Resurrection on the Third Day – Easter Sunday, bringing about new Life and Hope. She praised the efforts of Sevalaya to provide better opportunities to the underprivileged children and called upon the students to make the best use of the opportunities and come up in life.

Mahaveer Jayanthi was celebrated on 12/04/2009. Notable personalities of Jain community Mr. P.S.Surana, Mr. Ashok Kumar Kavadi, Mr. Dharmichandji Khariwal, Mr. Mahaveer Bhandari and Mr. Amarchad Jain were the special guests. The distinguished guests who spoke on the occasion lauded Sevalaya for celebrating the functions of all religions with a view to inculcating in the children the values of various religions. They said that all life as been created by the same God and they deserve same treatment as mankind. The children must develop love for all creations. They also appreciated that Sevalaya is practicing vegetarianism.

Sevalaya conducts free one month Computer training and Spoken English course every year for the benefit of rural students. This year, the course was inaugurated on 13/04/2009. Nearly 60 Students from economically poor family background from the nearby villages applied for the course. Mr. K.P.Srinivasan, District Elementary

### Free summer courses inaugurated at Sevalaya



Educational Officer, Thiruvallur was the Chief Guest. Mr. Ramamurthy, Deputy Inspector of Schools, Thiruvallur also participated in the inaugural function.

On 14/04/2009, Sevalaya celebrated "Chitthirai Thiruvizha". Mr. G.D.Rajasekar, President, Koyambedu vegetable and fruits market association was the chief guest. The vegetable and fruit market association announced that they will continue to supply free vegetables and fruits for Sevalaya this year also.

A Sports motivational programme was conducted for Sevalaya's hostel children, on 20/04/2009 by Mr. Elango, National Athlete, Thiruvallur District Athletic Association.

Nearly 200 school students camped at Sevalaya for 3 days – 24/04/2009 to 26/04/2009. The students engaged themselves in various activities at the campus. They also cleaned the school and hostel campus, planted saplings etc. The camp was organized by Ma Foi Foundation.

On 27/04/2009, V Serve a manpower Agency conducted an Awareness programme on Job opportunities for village youth and women. Mr. M.B.Nirmal, Founder President, Exnora International and Mr. Venkatesan Lakshmi Narasimman, President, V Serve Home Keepers of India were the chief guests. The programme was well attended by women and youth from nearby villages as well.

#### External Events

On 20/04/2009, Mr. V.Muralidharan Founder and Managing trustee, Sevalaya inaugurated the "PAMA Art Galley" of artiste Mr. P.Marianand situated at Poonamallae High road, Arumabakkam.

On 25/04/2009, Mr. V.Muralidharan Founder and Managing trustee, Sevalaya participated in the Trichy regional meet of TAFVA (Tamilnadu

### "Chitthirai Thiruvizha" at Sevalaya



Federation of voluntary agencies), held in Trichy. Mr. K.N.Nehru, Minister for Transport, Government of Tamil nadu was the chief guest.

#### On TV and on cyberspace.....

A Half an Hour Programme on activities of Sevalaya was telecast on Doordharshan Podhigai Channel, on 20/04/2009. An interview with Mr. V.Muralidharan, Founder & Managing Trustee of Sevalaya was recorded and uploaded in Tamil News website tamil.webdunia.com

#### Staff Book Review

On 04/04/2009, Ms. S.Bhavani spoke on "Parathira padiya Bharathi" by Mr. Kumari Anandan. "Bharathiyar's Memories" by Ms.Yathugiri Ammaiyaar was taken up for discussion by Mr. A.Mohamed Shefi on 11/04/2009. On 18/04/2009 Mr. M.Chelldurai shared his views on "Bharathiyar stories" by Bharathiyar. On 25/04/2009 Mr. P.Selvam talked about the Life of Vivekananda.

#### Temple visit

On 03/04/2009 and 17/04/2009, hostel girls went to Ramanathapuram Vinayagar Temple. On 07/04/2009, hostel students and Old age inmates went to Pakkam Shiva Temple "Pradosham". On 10/04/2009, hostel boys went to Ramanathapuram Vinayagar Temple. On 14/03/2009, "Chitthirai Thirunal" hostel boys and girls went to Pakkam Ellaiamman Temple.

#### Volunteers from Overseas....

Mr. Alexander Ivelev from United Kingdom volunteered his services at Sevalaya from 26/03/2009 to 05/04/2009. He conducted English classes for classes VI to IX.

Ms. Heike Einhorn from Germany, now settled in Swiss, arrived at Sevalaya for volunteering on 19/04/2009. She handled the spoken English summer classes for the village youth till 25/04/2009.

## Sundara Rama Iyer at Mannargudi

In a book we read recently, we came across an incident where a Police Informer made a vain bid to hijack Bharathiyar in to the British territory, posing as a friend. At the right moment when they were about to cross the Pondicherry threshold, due to the timely intervention of (the Divine and of) a friend, the bid was aborted. The side-light of the story is that just within a few days of the incident; Bharathiyar was entertaining the same "friend" in his house and was in a friendly banter with him. Family members and friends who witnessed this were naturally irked. Bharathiyar responded to their protests by singing the poem, "Pagaivanukkarulvaay!" (Love thine enemy, O! heart of mine! strike not the tiger threatening thee, but love it straight and true!-) (Tr: C.S.B.).

But both the informer and the Police failed to know that Bharathiyar had once slipped into British territory "throwing dust in to their eyes" as a Tamil expression would aptly describe it.

It was like this. This episode is narrated by Va. Raa, in his biography of Bharathiyar.

Kodiyalam Rangaswami Iyengar, a landlord and patriot who lived in Pondicherry was a good friend of "Sudhesis" (as the patriots in exile were called). He had devotion for Sri Aurobindo; and respect for V.V.S. Iyer. Though he was full of affection for Bharathiyar, he did not think much of his poetry. He was also of the view that Bharathiyar was not as bold and courageous as V.V.S. Iyer.

V.V.S Iyer, of course, has a proven merit as an adventurer. He was traveling to Pondicherry on his return to India from London. The British Police was on his trail. They were suspicious about the beard sporting, turban clad Sikh gentleman. Ultimately when they found the initials "V.V.S" inscribed on his suit case, they questioned him point blank and got the reply, "My name is Vir Vikram Singh!"

In a private conversation, Iyengar and his friends were talking almost derisively that Bharathiyar lacked such a spirit. Soon, however, they had to

change their view.

Kodiyalam Iyengar had a posh bungalow in Nagai (not Nagappattinam) near Mannargudi. He used to visit there often and stay for some time. Once when he was sitting in the "Thinnai" at around 11.00 A.M and talking with friends, a horse drawn cart stopped in front of his bungalow. From it descended, a bald headed, clean shaven gentleman wearing a buttonless shirt and a coat over it. There was a zari upper cloth over the coat. The dhoti was tucked in the traditional Brahmin style. "Who is it coming here at this time?" Iyengar went closer with curiosity, and wow! It was none other than Bharathiyar! Iyengar could not believe his eyes. Bharathiyar said he was bored with the life- in- exile and decided to have a break! But how is it that he escaped from the Police and from the people at Pondicherry to whom he is but a well-known figure? Iyengar acknowledged that Bharathiyar's adventure was much greater than that of V.V.S Iyer, whom the Police in India had scarcely seen.

Bharathiyar was introduced to local friends as "Sundara Rama Iyer". The whole week was spent in gaiety and mirth with Bharathiyar regaling them with humorous stories and songs. He was careful not to talk politics during this sojourn.

Kodiyalam Iyengar says he learnt his life's lesson; not to be hasty in judging people!



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