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## Societal and civilisational crisis is gripping the nation: P Sainath

**Durga**

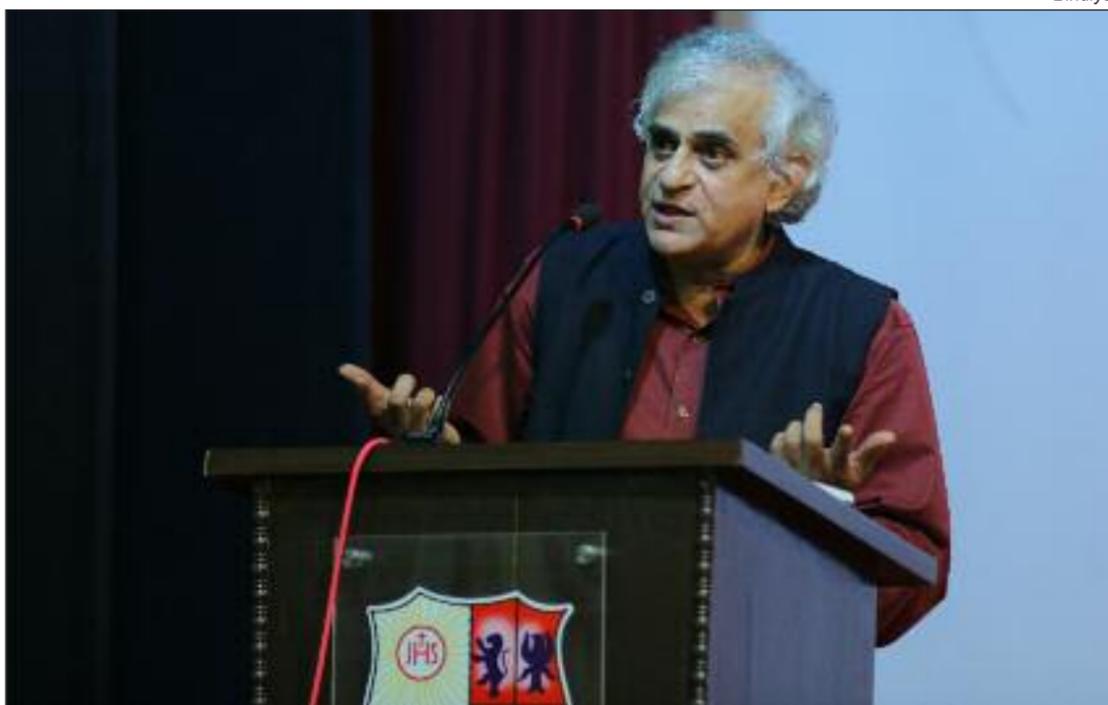
**CAMPUS:** The PG department of Journalism and Mass Communication at St Aloysius College celebrated its annual fest Media Manthan on February 14 and 15, 2020. Mr P Sainath, noted journalist and former rural editor for The Hindu was present as a chief guest.

While delivering his endowment lecture to the gathering, Mr Sainath spoke on various issues which are gripping the country and its people. He spoke on the topic 'Indian democracy at the post liberalisation and post truth era'.

"The policies adopted in the 90s have built the most unequal India," Mr Sainath said. He also quoted Dr Ambedkar's views on Indian constitution that liberty without equality allows for supremacy of a few over the multitude and we can't have one without the other.

While speaking about the agrarian crisis Mr Sainath stated, "Agrarian crisis has gone beyond the agrarian." He further added that it is no longer about loss of productivity, employment, life and farmer suicide; it is a societal and civilisational crisis and the crisis we are going through is a moral one where our integrity and intellect is affected.

Mr Sainath also criticised various rules passed by the government such as the cow slaughter



Bindiya

P. Sainath delivering the endowment lecture at St Aloysius College as part of Media Manthan 2020.

ban. He further explained how it has affected the interdependent industries such as Muslims who used to slaughter cows were now helpless and the cattle traders who belonged to the OBC category were now facing a lot of trouble. "One of the most important industries severely affected is the Kolhapuri Chappals from Kolhapur which faced major issues due to this ban and has now gone into bankruptcy," he added.

Mr Sainath, speaking on the policy makers, commented that urban people who had no knowledge of rural issues and how the

industries were inter dependent were running the country. While criticising the demonetisation policy he pointed how it devastated the rural economy as 98 per cent of transactions take place through cash.

He also addressed the issue of uncounted women labour. "Women and girls globally do unpaid work which amounts to about 12.5 billion hours per year and once we convert it in monetary terms it accounts for over 10.8 trillion dollars. This is unpaid labour," Mr Sainath said.

While addressing the issue of

'crisis of jobs' Mr Sainath said that major companies were laying off the employees predominantly from among the higher paid category to make more profits for their investors. Also, the adaptation of artificial intelligence would further cripple the job market, he said.

Rector of St Aloysius College Institutions Fr Dionysius Vaz SJ, Principal Dr (Fr) Praveen Martis SJ, HOD of Journalism and Mass Communication department Dr (Fr) Melwyn Pinto SJ were also present.

## Architectural marvel from yore

**Anjana**

**P**alamruthillam is an example of unexplainable architectural beauty. Located in Pattuvam, a small village in Kerala, is a four hundred year old building built by Mudhukundha, who was the landlord of that place. Illam is now under the administration of Jesuit fathers in Kerala, is a traditional Brahmin palace of 4900 square feet and has a two storey structure. Commonly known as ettukettu, which means having two courtyards inside the building, it is one of the unique structures in the whole world.

This ancient building is situated in the middle of five acres of dense forest, surrounded by a beautiful pond, creepers and huge trees. Palamruthillam, also known as Samskriti – Sahajeevanam Heritage Museum was built according to the sumptuous architectural style of Kerala. The principle behind the structure of the ettukettu is to give an experience of heaven on earth, right in the middle of the house. One courtyard can contain almost one feet of water and if it is more than one feet, it goes to the next naalukettu which can contain almost two feet of water. The remaining water will go to the pond nearby illam. "Because of the strict caste system that existed in Kerala, people were restricted from entering the illam. Samskriti spotted this building from a collapse 32 years ago and renovated the illam," says Fr Rajesh Punjathalackal, assistant director of Samskriti Sahajeevana Kendram.

## 'Veerappan and Vijay Mallya's business models are interesting!'

**Melwyn**

**CAMPUS:** Addressing the gathering during his endowment lecture on February 15. Mr Sainath made an interesting comment on the so called 'revenue model'.

"Whenever I visit IIMs and IITs for lectures on my PARI project, the students there ask me what my revenue model for my project is. I tell them that I do not have a revenue model. In fact, journalism does not begin with a revenue model. Gandhiji, Ambedkar, Bhagat Singh were all great journalists. But they did not have a revenue model," Mr Sainath said.

On a lighter note, he said that the best revenue model that he liked was that of forest brigand Veerappan and liquor baron Vijay Mallya. "Veerappan ruled the forest for forty years and from the top ministers to the villagers he could dictate terms and liver royally. Similarly, Mallya's revenue model was to steal the banks and run away abroad and live like a king," Mr Sainath added.

Journalism is not and can never be a business. It is a calling, he opined. While newspaper can be a business, television can be a business, journalism per se cannot be reduced to a business.

"Unfortunately today, journalists are recruited on a contract basis and they have no bargaining power; and there are no unions to fight for their cause. Hence, they are at the mercy of the corporate media houses for their survival and are made to write stories that cannot be called journalism," Mr Sainath said.

Answering a question as to the pressures he faced as a journalist, he said that external pressures from the government or others could be very well handled. It is the internal pressures from one's own media house that journalists find it difficult to manage.

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# Lady in the fields

Biju Neelankol



Bindu K. driving a tractor tilling the field in her native Pattuvam.

## Mufidha

Everyone is united by the food we have. Whatever culture or place you are from, you can strike a conversation with anyone on matters of food. Farmers are people whom we all forget, though without them we would have nothing to eat. They work hard, and they are much closer to the soil than any of us. It is a tough place to be and much tougher for a woman. Bindhu K. is a lady who not only broke the gender norms but the stereotypes too. She is from Pattuvam, a village in Kannur, Kerala. Bindhu is a winner of

State award for agriculture called Shrama Shakti Award. She is also a lady who is trained in every equipment used for agriculture. From tractor to tiller, she has used everything and she is even giving training for aspiring farmers.

Ms Bindhu's agricultural journey began early. From generations her family has been into agriculture. She was around eight when she started going to fields with her father. From then it became a part of her life. When she first started her training in farming machines, her father was not much keen about it. Even with all those obstacles she is really happy that she

followed her dreams.

Presently, she gives training to around 20 people on how to use agricultural equipments. Also, she is going around many places in Kerala to do farming, like Kannur, Kozhikode, and Trissur. She says that she is happy with the work she does. Her husband is also a farmer who supports her. Her kids who are studying also take part in helping them.

She did face negligence and lack of support from many. But the state recognised her and gave her the State Agriculture Award.

"The main problem is that young people are not given accurate information about the importance of farming. That is why no one is coming to take part in it," Bindhu said. She added that the state and the people should know about the importance of farming and irrespective of gender they should take part in it. There should be a proper way of teaching the importance of farming, she said.

"Our kids follow the path we choose. My parents were close to the soil, so I became close to it. Now I see my children also being close to the soil. It is a proud moment for me. Likewise, everyone should know the importance of cultivation, because without knowing our food and soil there will be no tomorrow," she added.

# A village of happiness, Pattuvam in Kerala

## Jeslin

As part of the rural exposure, ASAC students of MA JMC and MA English were assigned to different homes at Pattuvam village in Kannur district of Kerala state. The students lived with the residents assisting them in their daily activities. During their five-day stay, students could see as well as feel the true beauty of nature. One could perceive the effort and hard work each resident put in preserving nature around them.

The residents or house owners of Pattuvam range from carpenters, farmers, plumbers, teachers, a Panchayat member and so on. The middle class families of this village work hard in providing the very best of necessities to their family.

When the students reached each of their assigned homes, there was nothing but joy among the family members as they welcomed the students with a big smile. As students started to settle in, the children of the households gathered together with bright faces, happily jumping around. Even with a bare minimum of necessities available, the kind residents shared what little they had with the students.

"Few of the youth in this village are well educated with a higher degree. They go to work in cities.

Our only expectation is that they become successful in the future without forgetting their origin and homeland that they were brought up in. However, it is a proud moment for us when the youth of our village exceed our expectation by helping out family members in farming and other field work after coming back from a busy day of work at the city," says Mr George, one of the residents.

Even though Pattuvam is considered a remote village, it does not really seem so. The villagers or residents, despite lacking a higher education, have very good practical knowledge and skills that could help them survive even the worst of times. They are also well versed with the Internet and the village seems to be progressing for the better.

The major cause of concern in the village, however, is the lack of basic facilities like water, hospital, roads, transportation, electricity in schools etc. Despite the problems they face, the residents are strong willed, determined and hopeful for a brighter future.

"Working together brings us happiness. Here, if we see anyone going through a difficult time, we work together in solving their problems," says Annamma, another resident from the neighbourhood.

# Return of the son of soil!

## Nayana

In today's competitive world people keep on setting higher goals. Most of them dream of getting settled in foreign countries after education. If you were made to choose between your dream job in a foreign country and returning to your village what would you choose? Would you decide to go back to the roots? Here is a person who left a good earning job in a foreign country and started farming in his soil. Padhmanabhan K.V from a small village called Pattuvam in Kannur district, Kerala, is a quintessential 'son of soil' for you.

From 1992 to 2016 he did many jobs in the UAE. Later he came back to his village and started farming. For ages his family has been into farming, so it was not difficult for him to start farming. He is the youngest person in his family who is carrying forward the tradition of farming. In 2016 he came to Pattuvam village and bought 20 acres of land from his earnings and started farming. Even though there was no much profit, he enjoyed farming and continued it. Mr Padhmanabhan says, "I never had satisfaction in all the jobs I did before, but farming is near to my soul and gives me complete satisfaction."

Mr Padhmanabhan feels that his connection with the soil is

akin to the connection a child feels with its mother. Last year Kerala government provided different types of seeds, fertilisers and pesticides for the farm. This was helpful for farming and as a result there was less loss. For his hard work and love towards his soil, this year the local Panchayath recognised him and gave him the 'Best Cultivators Award'. He is happy that now his hard work has been recognised and that he is getting help from the government. People around him are also helping and encouraging him with the farming.

He says that getting workers to work in fields is difficult. So he had to depend on north Indian farm workers as they demand not so high salary. However, as the method these workers followed was different it affected the returns. "After so many years of doing cultivation we are getting support from the villagers and local government. If government had helped the farmers before at least people would have not sent their kids to the far away cities and farming and cultivation would have not been underrated," says Mr Padmanabhan. Though he faces many issues, Mr Padmanabhan has never thought of giving up farming. He is an inspiration to all the youths who only think of going out of their soil forgetting the importance of their origins.

# Pursuing passion for success

Babu



Lovely Babu is passionate about her craft work.

## Anjana

Pursuing one's passion with complete devotion is a stepping stone to success. Lovely Babu, a craft maker from Munnar, Kerala has been experimenting with waste materials and raw materials from nature since the age of 15 and her dedication has brought her success.

"I just work for the joy of it. If I don't enjoy the process, then I will not do it," says Lovely Babu. She has done many exhibitions at various places in Kerala. She was

part of the exhibition conducted by Kerala government organisation, Krishi Vijjans Kendra, Munnar. The feeling of achievement when she creates a physical object leads this woman to follow her own path.

"I found it difficult to grab many opportunities during my childhood. My parents didn't allow me to spend time doing these things as they were unaware of the opportunities they brought. I can't talk about those instances, yet that's what pushed me to do all these things," she opines.

She was also a part of Sankalp, an exhibition to showcase hidden talents of people conducted at Panamballi Nagar in Kerala. Lovely has been featured by various regional dailies.

Three years ago she started a facebook page 'Bliss'. Online platforms helped her to widen the popularity of her crafts. After marriage, she started her busy life by looking after her children and husband. But Lovely was not ready to continue with that life. "Many people bury their dreams and passion once they get married. But I got immense support from my husband and children to do what I love," says Lovely.

Now she gets orders for bouquets for weddings and other functions and sells her products at various exhibitions held across Kerala. Lovely has to travel a long way from Munnar to Kochi every week to get the necessary items for the work.

Aspiring to become an entrepreneur, she is planning to extend her small scale business outside Kerala as well. If you love what you do and have a burning desire within you won't get tired anytime. Lovely is a role model. She is an inspiration for many aspiring entrepreneurs. Lovely seem to imply that what makes a person inspring and great is the commitment and dedication she or he has towards her/his work.



TVESHA

## Divisive Act!

For the past few months our country has been witnessing a dreadful state-of-affairs in the wake of the recent amendment to the CAA Act. People have been in the forefront either denouncing the government's decision or defending it. As the protests linger on, the question of constitutional validity of the Act is still being debated.

The recent amendment to the Citizenship Act has triggered protests all over the country. This amendment grants citizenship by naturalisation to the "religious minorities" including Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Christians from three neighbouring countries Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Though the statement of objects and reasons holds that this move was "to protect religious minorities in neighbouring countries", the identified religious minorities facing persecution were only the ones mentioned above. The secular framework of the constitution is bound to be under siege by introducing such religious criteria and strategies. The act basically aims to polarise the country on religious lines.

Religion is a sensitive issue and it becomes even worse when

it is drawn into democratic decisions. The constitution stipulates equality of all before law and bars the state from discrimination on the basis of religion and thus religion cannot be a criterion for granting citizenship. But this move by the government has forced Indians, especially the students, to come out on streets in unprecedented numbers, raising their voices against the government and fighting for safeguarding the principles of the constitution. Since the day the Act was passed, there have been protests all over the country; but people expressing their dissent have been suppressed by the authority either by being detained or being subjected to the Internet shutdown.

The secular face of the country is seeing a crisis especially because the Act attempts to create and deepen communal division. The heated national debate on CAA will only come to a halt when the Act conforms to India's constitutional principles. The Act is completely devoid of any constitutional logic but whether it is a constituent of a bigger political agenda remains a question.

## Letters to the Editor

### 'Potemkin Effect' in India

During the 18th century, the Russian military leader, Grigory Potemkin, constructed fake villages to woo Empress Catherine and this came to be known as 'Potemkin effect'. The same effect was made use of by several other countries like North Korea and Nazi Germany. India joined the list in 2020 while chasing the dream of becoming a 'superpower'.

As part of US President Donald Trump's visit to India, a seven-foot-high wall was built along the roads of Ahmedabad that Trump was scheduled to travel. The Indian government took this initiative to shield a slum area that is home to 2,500 people so that the squalor and poverty faced by the

country is not revealed to the outer world.

The walls hide the failure of the government in providing the basic amenities to the most under privileged sections of our society. It merely hides the country's own democratic front through the words 'world's largest democracy meets world's greatest democracy,' that was hung on one of the posters welcoming Donald Trump.

The US President's visit to India has also shown what kind of a nation we have become. It is an act of shame on the part of the Indian government to portray the 'Incredible India' by hiding the incredible failure and poverty.

- Shalini

### Hegemony against dissent

The current situation of protests and the hegemony to suppress dissent has only made matters worse for Indian democracy. The rising dissatisfaction and conflict amongst citizens is resulting in various ways of demonstrations. Religion and caste based divisions are being highlighted more now and this leads to discriminatory

behaviour in society. One can say that India's secularism is truly in grave danger. The government seems to be pushing its agenda at all costs, even if it means to subjugate citizens to helpless submission. Such tyranny will only mar the essence of democracy.

- Durga

# Politics of fake encounters

Aswathy

On November 27, 2019, the nation woke up to the news of gang rape and murder of a 27-year old veterinarian Priyanka Reddy. Her body was found on the following day. Four suspects were arrested based on the evidence gathered from CCTV cameras. The accused were taken into judicial custody. Later on December 6, 2019, the news of the four accused being shot dead in an encounter by a team of Hyderabad police came out as the flash news. The police claimed that the accused tried to snatch a gun and flee during the re-creation of the crime scene.

While many were happy that those who had perpetrated heinous crime on the hapless veterinarian were punished, questions can be raised as to the validity of such encounters Article 21 of the Indian Constitution declares: No personal will be deprived of his life or personal liberty except in accordance with the procedure established by law. One wonders if the four accused were entitled to this article at all

when the law was not allowed to take its course.

After the first report of the Hyderabad encounter began flashing on T.V screens, a large number of politicians, celebrities, police officials and public came in support of the action taken by the police. The public strongly opined that to prevent such crimes, these actions were unavoidable. Though the encounter was clearly against the law, people supported the encounter as it appeals people's 'sensitivity'.

But according to the law, before depriving a person of his/her life, he/she has the right to be taken for trial. The accused must be given an opportunity to defend himself/herself and only after, if he/she is found guilty he/she can be executed. In Hyderabad, the accused were killed without these benefits of the law. It is ironic that laws and ethics are often contradictory.

On the one hand laws are created with an intention to maintain social order and peace in society and to provide protection to all citizens; and on the other, ethics are made to help people to decide upon what is right or wrong or

how to act. The 2012 Delhi gang rape case is yet another example. In 2012, the anger was over the incident. The accused were arrested with all the benefits of law and the case is still under trial.

The fact that our criminal justice moves with snail's pace has made victims and the public lose confidence in the law. This is the reason why people glorified Hyderabad encounter case saying that the justice was served right. However, one wonders if right to equality of law was served in the incident.

Under the Indian Constitution, the Supreme Court is the final court of appeal. The court has the power to make decisions, enforce the law and solve disputes. In the present case of Hyderabad, instant justice appears to have been done to the satisfaction of a small section of society. But, if the encounters are fake, it in no way remedies our system.

It is a fact that while those with money and power are able to manage law, the hapless who have no money will continue to be on the other side of the law, unless the system has a thorough makeover.

## Victims of 'evil epidemic'

Arjun

Nineteen-year old Amulya Leona was arrested in Bangalore, Karnataka for allegedly shouting the slogan 'Pakistan Zindabad' on February 20, 2020. This was enough for the police and the officials to declare her as 'antinational'. She also managed to shout 'Hindustan Zindabad' before the mike was snatched away by the so called 'nationalists' around her. The 'nationalism' inside them misinterpreted the love towards another country as hatred towards our country.

Amulya Leona was speaking at a protest against CAA, organised by Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Issai federation at Freedom Park, Bangalore. Unfortunately she uttered those 'undesirable' words praising and well-wishing the neighbouring country and was arrested. Her parents condemned her as well. The chief minister of Karnataka claimed that this young girl had Maoist links and her intension was to disturb harmony in the country. If she is connected with Maoists, why would Maoists praise Pakistan? No one seemed to bother about such questions. The magistrate before whom she was presented refused her bail and sent her for a 14-day in to judicial custody.

In our country standing for another country is considered as a serious crime, especially when somebody says well about Pakistan. This has been going on since the time of partition. No laws in India say that it is a crime



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to support or wish good for any other country. Tagore in his writings once said that 'Nationalism is a great menace. It is the particular thing which for years has been at the bottom of India's trouble'. India under the present government suffers immensely in the name of this 'epidemic of evil' that Tagore warned us of.

Our country needs patriotism instead of nationalism. Patriotism is an emotional attachment towards the country while nationalism is more of an irrational ideology. Even Gandhian overview had no place for any enmity for any other country. He even in his last days did many favours to Pakistan economically. Gandhi always wanted to be in harmony with other countries, especially those who were used to be a part of India.

The other sad part of this incident is the honourable chief minister of Karnataka claiming illogical things without any evidences. Through these acts the

government is clearly projecting the hidden agenda of shutting the voices against the government by claiming them 'antinational' for totally illogical reasons.

It is unfortunate that while it is ok to be poor and suffer in this country, one is not supposed to be 'antinational'. Even if you lead a miserable life, it is important for you to be a nationalist. It is unfortunate that the gullible masses today are led astray in the name of nationalism and Hindutva politics, even as India's economy is in bad shape.

The irony is that Amulya is charged with sedition, under section 124A of the Indian penal code which was back then used by colonial rulers against freedom fighters to suppress them. Here we can see that the historical monopoly is once again getting shaped slowly. It is about time every Indian citizen took note of the 'evil epidemic' and made conscious efforts to weed out this epidemic.

# “Chauvinism with regard to language learning is not good; learn as many languages as possible”

**Abhimithra and Mufidha**

**K.** Kasturirangan is the former Research Organisation and the chairman of the draft National Education Policy (NEP). He was at St Aloysius College (Autonomous) for an edowment lecture. *Tvesha* interacted with him on NEP.

**Q.** In June 2019 you drafted the National Education Policy. You were the head of the head of the drafting committee. Why do you think such a policy was necessitated?

The decision to formulate the National Education Policy at this present juncture was of the government. The government decides these matters. The rationale I got why they want to do this at this stage was that at the last election of this government, they promised to have a new education policy. Secondly, if we look at the previous educational policy, it was somewhere in 1986 or earlier which essentially means that it has been 25 years since we had an education policy.

Thirdly, with respect to it a lot of change has taken place nationally and globally. If we look at globally, the Internet made its foray into human endeavour only in the last 25 years and actually we were running with an education system where the Internet was not an entity. And when you look at social, economic and cultural aspects of this country, they have gone through major transformations in all these years. And they are all in consideration to how you want to create a new knowledge society which is consistent with this type of growth.

So there are a lot of changes in the societal fronts which have taken place in the last education system and now. The fourth industrial revolution is around the corner. Look at everyone, they talk about artificial intelligence, and you see the product of this all over the place. The industrial, medical and everything is influenced by this. How much education can deal with all this? It's plenty. You should know what to do and how to apply, which lacked in our education system.

Then we are also partners of many global agreements which are all significant in the context of developing humanity much

more than what it is today - like matters of health, education as well as environment parameters and many others. These are all millennia's sustainable development goals. And India is a signatory in the case of education.

We needed to review the previous one which was just good for

its time, and did quite a job in terms of upgrading the education status of its country. Many institutions came up with new methods and ideas, but they were not adequate in terms of very fast changing world and soon India is going to be an active partner. So these were taken into considerations which led the government to the idea of redrafting the Policy.

The goal was very tall, to define India in the next 20 to 25 years and how do you want an educa-



Harshita Varghese and Vaishali Puthran interacting with K. Kasturirangan.

tion system which will be consistent with India's growth and evolution. This was the biggest challenge we had to grapple with. I think we did what we could, and I hope the nation critically looks at it and adopts it for the best of its judgement.

So Mr Prakash Javedekar then HRD Minister called me and told we need a new draft for the policy and the government has decided that you should chair this committee. He also told that this should be valid for two decades.

I hope India will be a new knowledge society dominating in its own way, not in the wrong way but in the right way. We who created the policy hope that it will give new dimension and strength to human welfare as well as noble goals to the country

**Q.** Sir you have explained the flaws in education system; so what are the factors which require immediate change?

I have not found any flaws in the education system, because I was not an educationist, so I never went deep into the problems of the system. Taking that into

consideration I was a fresher for education. But what is important is that I chaired several important educational institutions, highest level of management for the chair.

**Q.** With this educational policy it is said that by 2030 all the universities and colleges that do not fall under the type 1, 2, 3

categories will be shut down. So if that happens what can the rural masses expect? Doesn't it say that higher education is only for the privileged?

No, first thing I suggest is to seek answers in this policy. The second aspect is we have a three tier system. The first tier is the research universities in the higher education, second is the research cum teaching universities. Third is the autonomous or degree giving colleges. These are to be kept in

**Q.** Mother tongue is too close to our culture. So, how do we compromise with the imposition of Hindi language on all?

First of all, I don't agree there is an imposition. So the question itself doesn't arise. We have a three language formula. Three language formula should have one of the languages as the mother tongue or home speaking or regional. Even though you may have Kannadigas in Mangalore, you have also Tulu and you have also got Urdu. So

communication has a much bigger role than this aspect of a criteria.

What is important is when the child grows within the age 3 to 8 you have the maximum development of the brain which is something like 85% of the development of the brain is complete by 8 years. That is precisely the time the lobe, language speaking and writing capability develop. At that particular time if you can excite them, stimulate them and if you want to slightly grow them better, then you become adapted to learning a language.

If I invest on my child for three languages in the early years, after doing all the education he says now he wants to go to Japan and to learn Japanese or he wants to go to China and learn their language, these things will become easy for him. If you block that ability because of the chauvinism of one language or two, you are basically removing an asset from that child which we should not do in the modern time.

So don't look at the language as an issue of a chauvinistic approach or learning this language or not learning that language. It is a question of pragmatism. Learn three languages which can easily be done; fourth and fifth languages can also be learnt in the same period. It is also an investment on the child for future of learning languages.

India is a country with 18 main languages - classical languages, modern languages and Sanskrit, which is more than the combined value of Greek and Latin. Rather than getting into discussion about which language to learn, try to assimilate this great culture of ours.

**Q.** Rural areas are still lacking digital support. Was that also a reason for drafting such a policy?

In rural areas there is a general provision of an educational system which will meet the aspirations of the rural folk. When you create a policy of this kind knowing well that rural education needs revamping, better infrastructure, more committed teachers, the whole idea is to make sure that rural system provides an opportunity as good as their aspirations.

It also ties up with all the local activity - hospitals, industries, vocational centres, environment and agricultural activities. All of them are tied up with the educational system.

So they are not standalone systems of education, they are coupled systems. Those who don't want to leave the rural area, it provides for ample opportunities for an education which will make them relevant in that area. That is one of the very carefully drafted strategies that we have identified.

every district of the country whether it is developed or underdeveloped. And wherever there are gaps because of developmental issues, accessibility issues etc,

you have this plurality. If you want to talk about the regional language there could be a Kannada question. If you want to talk at home, it can be a language

**“If you don't want to talk to the 70% of India, you decide that you are not going to learn this. It has nothing to do with our likes or dislikes. It is a pragmatic situation that we are facing.**

we will have to create new institutions.

At the same time there are also institutions that are begging for students. At one time the demography said that there were lots of youngsters. They grew and they left; there were new replacements. So this is a dynamic issue. We need to make sure that we put the infrastructure at the right place where there is a need. We should be able to bring education at the doorstep of everyone in this country. In fact the strength of this education system is that it addresses all ages. Right from the day you are born education takes over.

There is a home schooling for the first three years, then three year onwards pre-school, five years later middle school, in another four years you go to secondary. 15 years of solid school education preceded by three years of home schooling.

So the policy is an exercise in flexibility and covering all ages and providing for the interest of the youngsters - what he or she wants to do and it is highly centric to the inspirations of the youth.

## Mélange of cultures at Karavali Utsav 2020

**Jeslin**

**MANGALORE:** With an energetic and bright start, the 10-day Karavali festival, 'Karavali Utsav 2020' organised by the Dakshina Kannada district administration commenced on January 10 at the Karavali utsav ground at Lalbagh, Mangalore. A colourful procession of 29 cultural groups from across Karnataka set off from Nehru Maidan, moving through Navabharath circle ending at Karavali Utsav grounds marking the inauguration of Karavali Utsav 2020.

Addressing the gathering at the inaugural ceremony, district in-charge minister Kota Srinivas Poojari said, "Mangaluru is well known for its culture and tradition.

It has sustained because of people's love towards these olden cultures. Karavali Utsav is one such platform to exhibit our different traditions". Actor Rishab Shetty and Mangaluru city south MLA, D Vedavyas Kamath presided over the inaugural function.

Cultural programmes were held every day till January 19 at Kadri park and Karavali Utsav ground. Nritya Vaibhava, Haasya-laasya, Yakshagaana, Yoga, Mimicry, Stencil picture and Tulu drama



College students performing dance drama at Yuva Utsav 2020.

were some of the notable events.

As part of this festival, Yuva Utsav was also held on January 16 and 17 at Kadri park where students from various colleges across Dakshina Kannada participated in different events. International kite festival along with beach games like volleyball and throwball, musical programmes, zumba and short film competitions were also held on January 17 at Panambur beach. The exhibition at the ground was open till February 10.

Delicious food items, traditional

apparels and different household appliances from Mysore, Jaipur, Bombay and Rajasthan were some of the main items at the open exhibition.

"I visit Karavali Utsav almost every year with my friends. I enjoy a lot here as the feeling is different compared to buying from shops. The items are also low priced. I like the food counters where homemade delicacies of different states are available," said Deepti Rao, a student of Father Muller Medical College.

## PG students experience rural immersion in Pattuvam, Kerala



Students walking through paddy fields at Pattuvam.

**Anusree**

**PATTUVAM:** Moving away from the bustle of city life, and getting to experience the essence of village life, students of MA Journalism and Mass Communication and MA English took part in a five day rural immersion programme in Pattuvam, Kerala.

Accompanied by the faculties from both the departments, students visited Samskriti Sahajeevanam Heritage centre managed by the Jesuit Society in Kerala.

The exposure programme was inaugurated by the Panchayat president of Pattuvam, Anackal Chandran, in the presence of Fr Joe Mathew, director of Sahajeevanam, Fr Sunny Memana, Parish Priest, Mrs Lalitha Balakrishnan,

Panchayat member, Dr (Fr) Melwyn Pinto SJ, HOD of MA-JMC department, and Dr Melisa Goveas, HOD of English department. Fr Rajesh Punchathalackal delivered the welcome address and Mr David Thomas rendered the vote of thanks.

On the first day of the camp, students visited Palamruthillam, which is a traditional bungalow of the Brahmins built according to the rich architectural style of Kerala, 'ettukett'.

The illam is around 400 years old and witnesses the legend, mystery and mastery of generations of the great times gone by. Students spent their time cherishing the beauty of nature that surrounds the illam.

This heritage centre is currently

maintained by Fr Rajesh Punchathalackal. He talked about the architectural excellence of illam and explained the significance of living an eco friendly life.

Students also got a chance to experience people's lives, their challenges, and nature of their work for the next three days by staying with them in their houses, working with them in rubber farms, staying with old age and differently abled people.

The exposure programme ended on the fifth day. Students shared their experiences of the five day camp they spent in Pattuvam, exploring the beauty of nature, getting to know people and experiencing an aesthetic side of life.

"One of the most common things that were observed was the apprehension among students, especially when it comes to working and staying with strangers. But when they returned these strangers have become family members and there was also a certain amount of sadness when the exposure programme ended," said Dr Melisa Goveas, HOD of English department.

The five day rural visit was a very different experience for the students. They have also got the rare opportunity to live a common man's life for few days which they can cherish throughout their life.

## Homosexuality is not a disease, says author

**Anjana**

**CAMPUS:** Kannada novelist Vasudhendra, himself a gay, talked about his life journey and struggles of accepting his sexuality during the Aloysian Literature Festival here on February 17. He was speaking on the subject, 'history and contemporary in fiction writing'.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Vasudhendra said, "At the age of 37, my condition became bad and I went into deep depression. Later I realised that this is what I have been suppressing for years. So I started writing Mohanaswamy which was about homosexuality, the subject that was not explored very much in Kannada literature."

The book has been translated into Malayalam, English, Telugu, Marathi and Spanish. Mr Vasudhendra also talked about how the contemporary world reacts to the issue of homosexuality and how famous writers in Kannada literature have treated this subject in

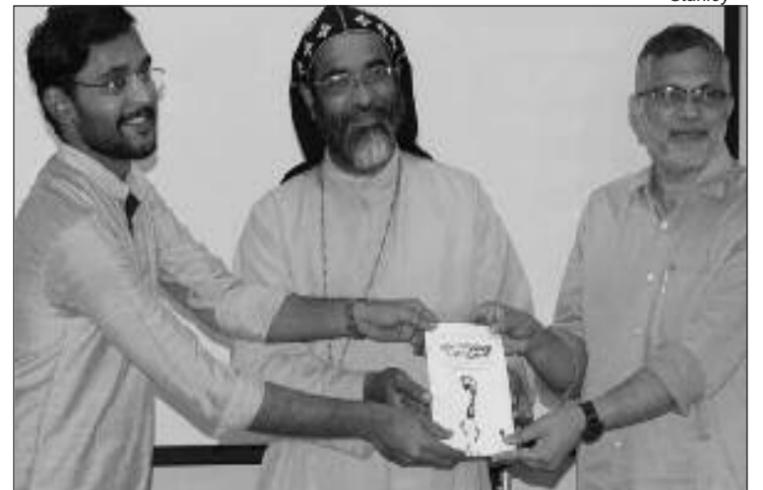
their books. He said, "I am proud of my Kannada literature, but when it comes to the subject of homosexuality, issues will start. Most of the writers depicted homosexuality as an ultimate sin."

He shared his life experiences with the audience as a queer writer and talked about the mentality of Indians towards homosexuality. "I don't see any difference between a homosexual and a heterosexual. But ninety nine percent of Indians still think that it is a disease which came from western countries. People are not ready to accept it. Hence, unfortunately, if you are a gay, you are alone in society," he added.

"Homosexuality is not a handicap. For many years I was forced to believe it as a handicap. But once you start accepting your sexuality, you are accepting yourself. If you accept that this is how I am, you will start looking at yourself beautifully," Mr Vasudhendra said.

## Young author of sensitivity

**Stanley**



Libin Jo Mathew releasing his second book.

**Anjana**

Not everybody can inspire through words and writing. It requires creative energy. It doesn't matter whether you focus on short stories or novels. "I believe that we all have a small life and within this short span, we should try to make an impact on another person's life. If we can give a little hope to a person, our life's purpose will be fulfilled. I'm sure that I can impact people through my writing," says Libin Jo Mathew, author of three books.

Hailing from Kerala, Libin has published three books namely Lumikha, Vijayathinte Chuvadukal and Nurungu Vettam. He started his writing career by writing articles for magazines. Inspired by the books of Paulo Coelho, he was eager to read and write from childhood. His first book, Lumikha, which was published in 2018, has been dedicated to his mother and talks about mother's love. Lumikha, means 'creator'. It is unique in the way he portrays mother and the love for a mother.

"The difficulty I found while writing is the selection of ideas and the title for the book. We live in an informative age. We can get access to any kind of information within seconds. So selecting and presenting an idea to the readers in a different and interesting manner is really challenging," Libin says. He is also an online writer. He says he is always inspired by the idea 'even if you die, your words will remain forever'.

His latest book, Nurungu Vettam (A glimpse of light) gives a valuable message to the readers, i.e. "we all can't become the greatest light in the houses, but we can become a small burning fire in order to be the light in the pathway of others". "The book gives a vivid picture of a spiritual journey which originates in worldly success and reaches God. Hence the idea of the book revolves around the physical realm of success as well as God. It is important to maintain a balance between world as well as God in order to live a happy and joyful life," Libin reflects philosophically.

## Tasting the Kizhiporatta at Kerala joint

Abhimithra



Kizhiporatta arrives as a steaming bag of banana leaf.

Indian food is mainly differentiated as North Indian food and South Indian food. While the pulses and rotis dominate the north Indian diet, south Indian food is famous for its spices and dosas. But when it comes to Kerala food, there are some must try cuisines like Thallaserry Biriyan, Kozhikodan halwas, Kuttanadan karimeen fry, porotta and beef roast.

It is a challenge to recreate the same taste of Kerala food in any other place. But, in Mangalore, a developing city in the state of Karnataka, a Kerala restaurant is stealing the limelight from among even the local food joints. This may be the same reason why the name of this hotel is 'The Taste of Kerala'.

The restaurant has a rich menu and the daily specials are even more satisfying. The restaurant is located in Attavar, not far from the heart of the city and the railway station. The whole ambience of the restaurant is best at night with the outdoor tables, bamboo chairs and the little fairy lights that give a dream like vibe. The live music is another attraction for the place, where even the customers are welcome to sing. It is also a perfect place for hangout with friends.

When it comes to food, the kizhiporotta is one of the most suggested food item from their menu. Porotta and chicken curry is the best combination and it is even more delicious when it comes in a "kizhi", a Malayalam term which means 'a bag of'. The kizhiporotta is a bag of porotta filled with chicken and its delicious gravy.

The kizhiporotta arrives at the customer as a steaming bag of banana leaf, tied beautifully at the top. As the customer unties this bag, inside is the mouthwatering porotta and chicken with thick gravy rich in masala. Each bite is an explosion of flavors in the mouth. Even the aroma is invigorating.

The kizhiporotta is a must try for all foodies out there in town who would like to experience the famous food combo of Kerala - porotta and chicken - with a twist.

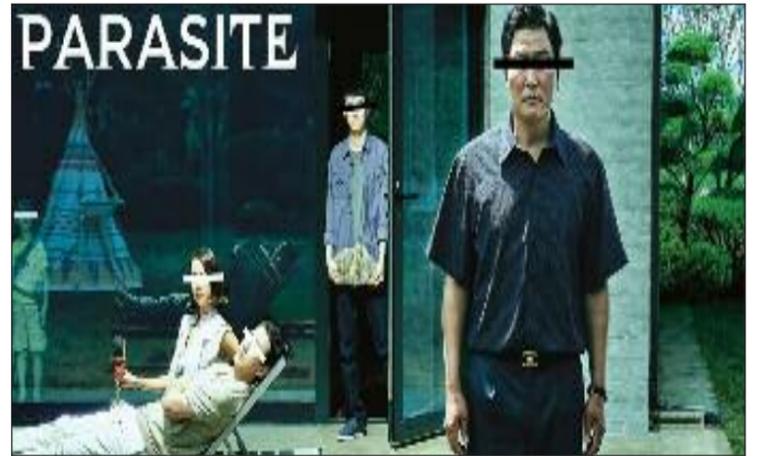
## Who really is the parasite?

Arya

**Parasite (2019)**  
**Director: Bong Joon Ho**  
**Screenwriters: Bong Joon Ho, Han Jin Wan**  
**Cast: Song Kang Ho, Lee Sun Kyun, Cho Yeon Jeong, Choi Woo Shik,**

*Parasite* is a 2019 South Korean black comedy thriller from the Korean filmmaker Bong Joon-ho. The story follows the members of a poor family who scheme to become employed by a wealthy family by infiltrating their household and posing as unrelated, highly qualified individuals. *Parasite* can be best described as a melancholy ghost story. It is a visual treat, what with every shot distilling the movie's themes and the performances. At the heart of the film depicts the worrying evolutionary fear of all, the inability to protect one's family.

The real question that crops up is who are the real parasites? The poor who wished to have a good life or the upper class who treat the poor as nothing? Or is the system itself the parasite? It brilliantly exposes the capitalism in society that has been presented as the 'parasite' here. The class difference, the economical and the physical boundaries set by the same people in society come forth in all its rawness. It also shows up a mirror to the entrails of a society



that is unjust to the poor, driving them to desperation. One thing that I absolutely loved about *Parasite* was the simplistic way it took to handle those sensitive subjects. Such kind of conflict happens in every country regardless of gender and culture.

The film won four Academy awards this year and made history at the Oscars by winning the best film award for a non-English film for the first time ever. The film is a combination of entertainment, thrill with some dark twists and disturbing scenes which will surely make an impact on viewers' minds. The concept of *Parasite* is built on the conflict and contrast between upper and lower classes of society.

The film is a social satire, as the director of the film says "a comedy without clowns, a tragedy without villains". The smell has a big prominence in the movie,

which in turn makes a statement that poor people always smell bad. The film also involves a stone which is considered to have great importance. Each character has an important role to play in the film. The danger of trusting the working class is all what the film speaks about.

The waterproof tent used by the kid in the movie v/s semi-basement room that gets flooded shows the real difference between being rich and poor.

The final scene of the film where the son tells the viewers that he will buy the house and will free his father shows his tremendous love toward his father and his wish to become rich. The film delivers everything that makes a movie perfect and shakes you to your core. The film has no answers for all the misery the poor face in society; but it does raise some critical questions.

## SAC campus home to 38 bird species

Arya



Pale-billed-flowerpecker

**CAMPUS:** St Aloysius College campus is home to 38 species of birds. The team of bird watchers led by Dr Vineeth Kumar, assistant professor at department of Zoology has counted as many as four new species of birds among the total 38 discovered this year. Bird Count India Organisation in collaboration with e-bird along with students adds new species to the checklist every year. According to the list of 2019-2020 the College found four new species of birds from the campus. They include white brow backtail, red wattled lapwing, Nilgiri flower pecker and jungle babbler. "Students who find new bird species at the campus are allowed to add them to the checklist of campus bird count," said Dr Vineeth Kumar.

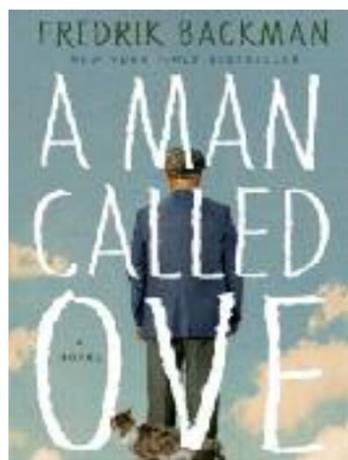
The department of Zoology has been initiating this programme called 'campus bird count' for the past three years.

## Finding hope amidst despair!

Mufidha

**Name of the book: A Man Called Ove**  
**Author: Fredrik Backman**  
**Year of publication: 2012**  
**Publisher: Atria Publishing Group (US)**

'A Man called Ove' is a 2012 novel by Fredrik Backman, who is a Swedish columnist, blogger and a writer. The story revolves around an old grumpy man called Ove, who wakes up every day with the intention of ending his life, because he has no reason to live after his wife passed away. But each day one thing or the other happens which makes him postpone his plan. He doesn't like being around people but circumstances and fate puts a lot of people



around him. In each chapter we can see his story unfolding as we get closer to the characters. He drives an old car 'Saab' around which was left with him since his father's death. When he decides to die he makes an elaborate plan as to what all he should do with his

bills that are not paid, taking care of his cat, and what to do with the Saab. But his plans get cancelled when Parvaneh, a pregnant Iranian refugee moves into the house next to Ove with her family. She brings life into Ove's lonely life which only his wife Souja had done earlier. Parvaneh brings with her a lot of vibrant characters with which we see the story unfolding.

Ove is a great man but is pictured as grumpy and selfish. But as the story moves, we see why he is what he is, with his parents' death when he was a child, and people always bullying him to grab his property. Only Souja knew what he was and loved him. He was a man who joked around and loved too much. We can see the author building his character piece by piece.

His care is mainly shown through the cat Ernest. Even though he never claims the ownership of the cat, one can see how much he cares for the cat. The sequence of him talking to the cat is a masterpiece. Backman depicts that scene like a dance performance with the rhythm and grace with a comical touch in it.

The novel is filled with great comical movements which make the reader laugh but there is a much deeper meaning to every chapter as the main character rediscovers himself. He is letting others fill up the empty spaces, so that he can live. This is because it was loneliness which made him think of taking his own life. Maybe we all have to be like Ove, have a big heart, which he had quite literally.

## Alva's College victorious in Media Manthan 2020



Alva's College students with the trophy.

**CAMPUS:** Alva's College won the overall championship in Media Manthan 2020, the media fest, organised by the PG department of Journalism and Mass Communication, St Aloysius College (Autonomous).

The tenth edition of the two day fest saw the presence of senior journalist P. Sainath, who besides delivering an endowment lecture on the first day, conducted a workshop on the People's Archive of Rural India (PARI) project.

Popular radio jockey RJ Arpith was the chief

guest at the valedictory. In his address, Mr Arpith said that the present day students had a lot more opportunities and possibilities that students some years back lacked. However, it is important to make the best use of all those opportunities to add value to all the work students do, especially in the digital platforms, he said.

Registrar of the College Dr Alwyn D'Sa presided over the function. St Aloysius College students were the runners up. Annett Manoj proposed the vote of thanks. Sneha Kudva compered the programme.



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