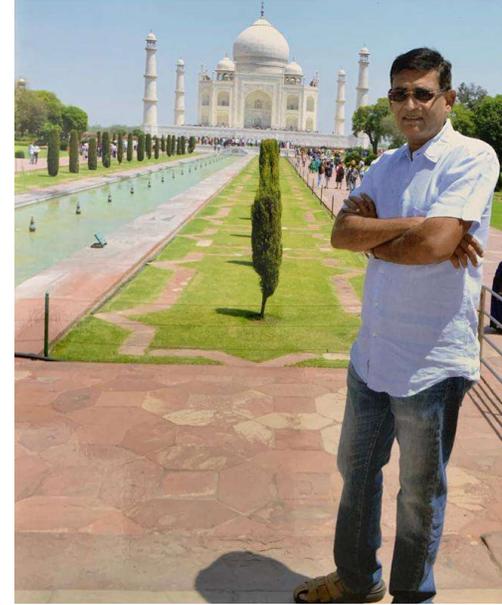


# REFLECTIONS

January 2021



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STD : XII - B



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~

Tell us

What we're doing right and what we're doing  
wrong and what you think of this issue. We'd love  
to hear from you.

## From the Editorial Board

THE YEAR 2020 HAS BEEN MUCH-MALIGNED FOR reasons we know. We were waiting with bated breath for 31 December to take that turn to signal the dawn of 2021. But I wonder, why though? Does the virus know that a new year has heralded and it should pack its bags and leave us alone so that we can all go back to the "normal"? Gather at malls, movie houses, beaches, drink our joys and sorrows at pubs, pollute the city? But folks, remember! We haven't yet crossed the threshold. Nature has waged a war against humanity and the only way to win this is—together.

We should be cautious and follow all the safety measures governments have expounded. Having said that, I do think we had a lot of takeaways from 2020.

My goal was to get fit because staying at home with no physical activity was a dreadful thought. What were your takeaways?

We at *Reflections* would love to hear about them. Do write to us and let us know.

~ Ujwala

**NEWGen**  
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Gowrishankar with his wife Srividhya and their daughter Niveditha.



KLI women folk in traditional wear.



KLI team members spending a day at the beach.

# The Atticus Story

*To kill a mockingbird* by Harper Lee

THERE ARE GOOD BOOKS, THERE ARE WONDERFUL BOOKS and then there is *To Kill a Mocking Bird*. Harper Lee's only book for a long time (her second book, *Go Set a Watchman*, was recently published 55 years after her first) was published in 1960 and won the 1961 Pulitzer Prize. It has since become a classic of modern American literature.

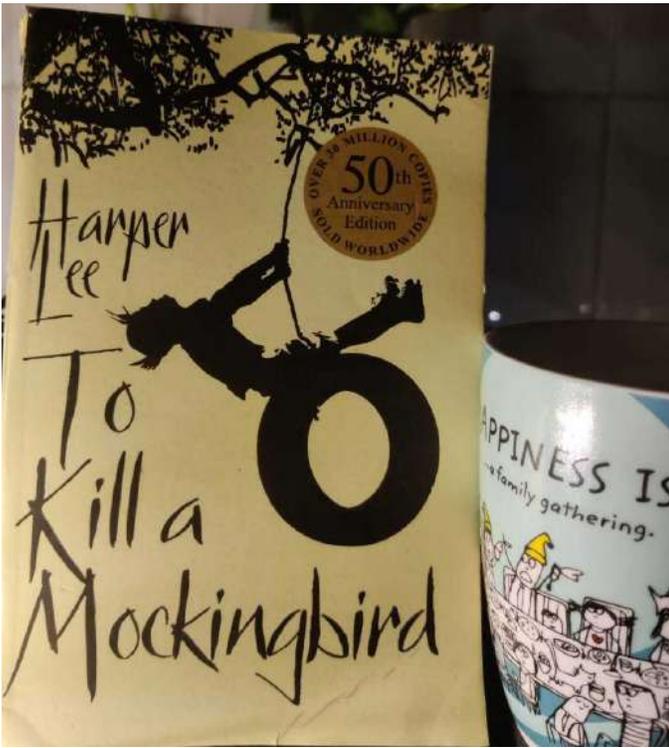
But I am not writing this piece to talk about statistics or about how it influenced the civil rights movement back then. No! I write about it because it is such a rich source of human characteristics and behavior. Every tiny narration, hidden in the nooks and corners of the book, is a gem unto itself. If you google this book, it talks about racial injustice in the Deep South in conjunction with a description of the first-person narrator, Scout, a 9-year-old girl, and her 12-year-old

brother Jem. Can you imagine how far apart these two are on the spectrum of imagination? But Lee has beautifully interwoven these into a beautiful and heart-warming story.

My hero of this book is a small-town lawyer called Atticus Finch, father of Scout and Jem. The overall story is of Atticus defending a



Ujwala loves to read. Books have been her best friend and companion on happy days and sad days, sunny days and rainy days. She feels like she has lost a best friend whenever she turns the last page of a book. She loves sci-fi thrillers, war stories, conspiracy mazes, whodunits, et al. But if you want to be in her good "books," don't show her a non-fiction book.



Black man who is accused of raping a white woman. But throughout the narrative, what stands out is what an absolutely fabulous man Atticus is. Thoroughly unpretentious, downright straightforward and a man of conscience, he is never preachy, even to his motherless kids. Scout is a tomboy and loves to hand out a punch to her class boys even when she is in the first grade. But Atticus reins her in with such panache that it is a delight to behold their conversations. When the racist citizens of the town are repulsed at the idea of Atticus defending a Black man, Jem and Scout face a lot of flak at school. Atticus tells the defiant Scout, “You just hold your head high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don't you let 'em get your goat. Try fightin' with your head for a change.”

Their housekeeper is a Black woman, Calpurnia, and Atticus will not take a word against

her by the ever-whining Scout. They have a neighbor, Boo (Arthur) Radley, a recluse and a social misfit but a generally harmless guy, whom the kids disturb in their attempt to befriend. When Atticus learns of this, he gives them a thorough talking down and threatens them with dire consequences. His advice to the kids is a classic metaphor for Arthur and everything innocent: “Mockingbirds don't do one thing except make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corn cribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.”

As events unfold and the children see a different side to their benign father, be it during a neighbourhood fire, or the passing away of an elderly neighbor, or the shooting down of a rabid and dangerous dog, or his standing up to a lynch mob intent on handing out their own justice to Tom Robinson (accused in the rape trial) before the trial begins, or the final courtroom scene where he delivers an emotional and outstanding closing argument of his case—*they grow up*; they transform from being innocent kids who looked upon their father as just a provider to realizing that he is a person who is a gentleman in the truest sense of the word, is highly respected by the Black population of the town, is a hero worth emulating, and to ultimately being proud of him as a fine human being. He had the strongest moral compass than anyone they knew. Read this book, friends! Otherwise you would have lived a wasted life :)

Some quotes worth remembering from the book:

"Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing."

—Scout, when her teacher forbids her from reading before being taught in school. Scout had learnt to read at a very young age when Atticus read the newspaper loudly with her on his lap.

"The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience."

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it."

"People generally see what they look for and hear what they listen for."

"Things are always better in the morning."

"Atticus told me to delete the adjectives and I'd have the facts."

"You can choose your friends but you sho' can't choose your family, an' they're still kin to you no matter whether you acknowledge 'em or not, and it makes you look right silly when you don't."

"I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what."

S O L O M O N D A S

# Let's not forget

WHAT A YEAR THAT JUST WENT

So many lives gone silent

All the pain and peace at last

Let's not forget what was past

Life stood still and cried

Nature grieved and watched things slide

Life so fragile and short

Let's not forget what was past

The tiniest crushed the giant

A crown so vain and defiant

Handing out relentless agony and death

Made humans struggle for breath

But pain and failure cannot last

Humankind has prevailed in the past

Life did emerge victorious

With hope and faith and health glorious

Let's not forget what just passed

Let's love and have peace at last

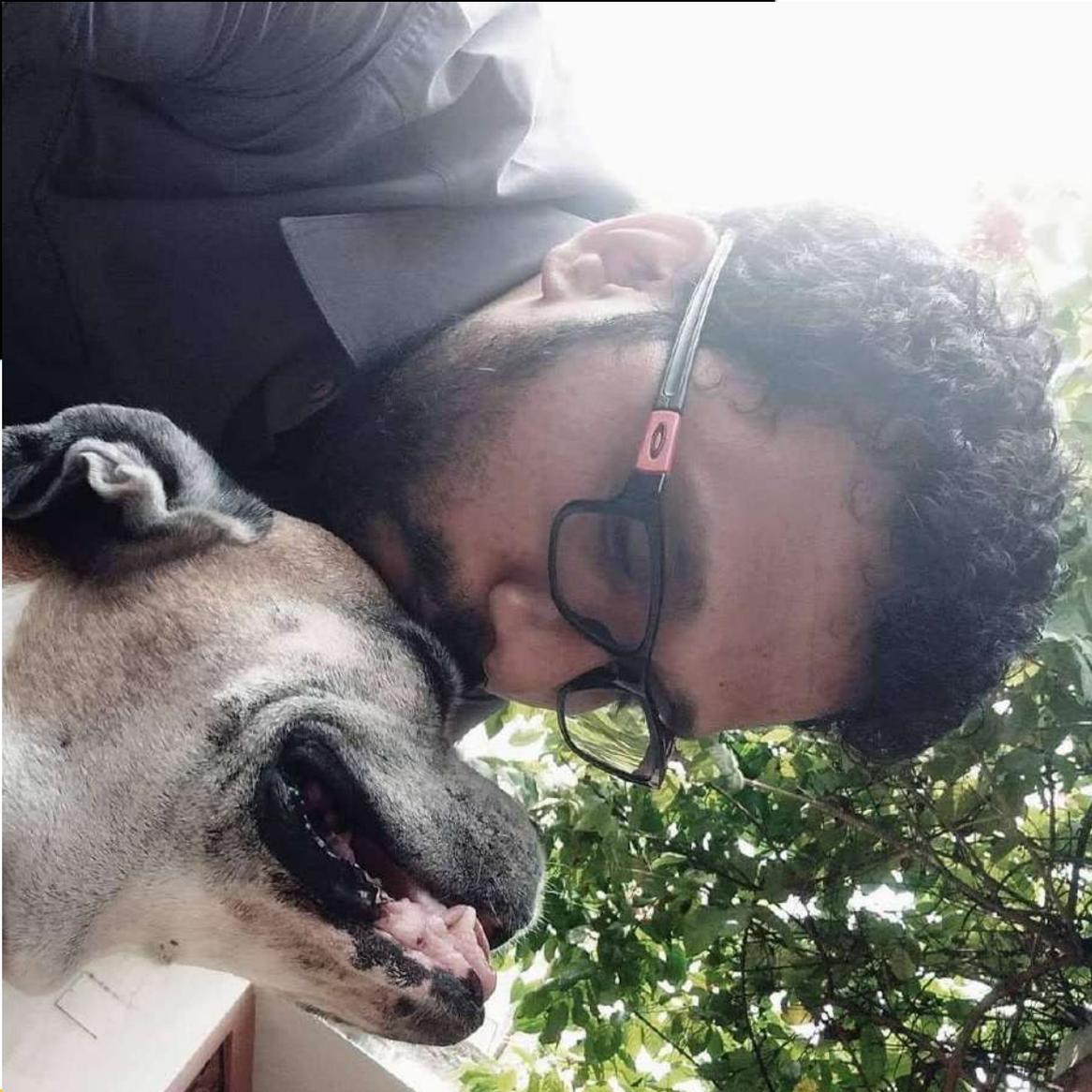
Life is too short to be only "Me"

Let's share and care and just break free



Solomon Das is a copy-editor with Tax &

Accounting. A researcher at heart, he is passionate about nature and sustainable practices. He loves reading books and listening to music in his spare time.



ANISH JOSEPH CHACKO

# Cleo: A tribute

IN MY THREE YEARS AT NEWGEN, I NEVER REALLY pondered much about the word *Reflections*. Sure, it is an interesting one, one that extends its arms, welcoming us to different worlds inhabited by each contributor.

That has well changed. Two events a few months ago forced me to pause and, well, reflect.

\* \* \*



Cleo chewing on a treat but looking like she's smoking a cigar!

*You're a good boy; you're my good boy.*

—Penny, from the movie *Bolt* (2008)

Girl, actually, in what follows.

Eleven years ago, Cleo entered our lives. She was, unfortunately, the “abandoned” one of the litter. Thanks to my sister, she found herself a home, if not the best of homes. She grew to be as fiercely loyal as she was adorably loveable.

As is the way of life, however, old age and its debilitating nature got to her. There were times when we worried that she would not make it, but she would bounce right back on her feet after three or four days of agony, both for her and her humans. Mum would often tell

me that Cleo bounced back to life because of me. It does feel like high praise, looking back on those times now.

Cleo had given us more than just a pocketful of memories. A memory that I will fondly remember is her visit to the vet in March during one of her “sick spells.” While the doctor noted that she had arthritis, he realized that I needed to be prepared for an uncertain time ahead; as we were discussing her condition and the possible complications of surgery at her age, and how best I could make her days as comfortable as possible, she grew restless and shuffled about, exasperating my dad. I admonished her for her restlessness. What she did next greatly moved me: she sat down, eyes fixated on me, unblinking, and simply smiled. It was a smile that seamlessly weaved its way through the sadness I was harboring while trying to process the vet’s instructions. That smile did have the desired effect on the doctor, for he stated, “She has eyes only for you.”

The incident left an indelible mark on me, and to preserve that memory, I wrote her a little musical piece (if stringing together a few chords in a pattern could count as one). I’ve since modified the original version, which I’d uploaded on YouTube back then, but this version stands unrecorded. (I’ve made it a resolution this year to record and quite possibly release some music. Fingers crossed.)

Toward the end of August, on her final visit to the vet, the situation looked grim. Cleo



Anish with his dad.

greeted me with tired eyes and a doleful gaze while lying on the table following an x-ray. She waited patiently as I wrapped up discussions with the vet. That evening, I took her for a long drive, seeking to buoy her spirits. Over the next couple of days, I carried her in my arms, as one would a baby, probably hoping she would remember being carried around when she was younger. For two nights I kept sleep at bay,

helping her cope with her pain that manifested itself through her feeble whines.

She passed away on the evening of September 5, 2020. I was fortunate to have been by her side as she stretched a final time. I lifted her head in my arms, earnestly hoping for eyes to slowly open as if waking from a long nap. She lay there, peaceful.

I will and do miss seeing her through the gate as I leave home, knowing that she'd be waiting for my return. I will and do miss the fuzzy feeling, no matter how long (or short) or how tired the day would be, of returning home to her happy dances and playful hugs. The remainder of 2020 was a quiet affair (and what has followed since). Cleo's absence was deafening, drowning out all the noise from crackers and funeral processions. The sadness, though, is set aside by a gentle reminder that she will not have to worry anymore.

\* \* \*

*Last scene of all,*

*That ends this strange eventful history*

*Is second childishness ...*

—William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

(Act II, Scene VII)

In June, my old man suffered a serious stroke that shook the family. Here was a man who, just the previous day, was an energetic soul, packing a punch, and who now lay resting, in a hospital, sedated.

It was a tense month, with us running to and from the hospital, Cleo relegated to “homeland security.” It did take its toll on her, since much of our time was spent at the hospital.

The stroke had affected the right side of Dad's body, as well as his speech. Recovery from a stroke of that intensity would take its time, the doctors informed us. What lay ahead

following Dad's discharging from the hospital was something we were not prepared for.

Second childishness.

There is a Malayalam movie titled *Thanmathra* (2005) that explores a family's coping with the father slipping into Alzheimer's disease. The doctor in the movie speaks of how the real struggle lay with the family having to adjust to this altered situation to support the father.

From bathing him to dressing him, to helping him to his feet, to helping him eat ... all my life I have been grateful to my parents, but now I marveled at how they tolerated their noisy, fussy toddlers, all three of them. The roles had been reversed. Every time Dad innocently gazes at me, and laughs at and with me, I'm reminded of my childhood and their eternal patience all through.

Second childishness indeed!

The stroke seemed to have tempered the bond between father and son, a bond that had, over the years, grown strong as well as faded. Things haven't always been rosy. But we do our best to let him know that he's not fighting alone, even as he struggles with the aphasia. Time heals, the doctor said on our follow-up appointments. He was enthralled that Dad had been making slow but steady progress, gauging from his near-helplessness during the first appointment. And Dad has been making some progress, even as he slips back now and then, even when he grows weary and disheartened. These ups and downs, the going forward and sliding back,

remind me of my biochemistry professor who proffered a concise answer to my complaints of having negative results in my experiments during my master's study: "Negative results are still results. Don't let that bog you." Dad now walks on his own, with little support, as well as eats by himself. And he understands what goes on around him. That has been a major leap forward.

\* \* \*

I realize that life is fragile. We tend to get so rushed with the worries of the world that we seldom give pause to reflect, absorb, and tread a bit slower, "take it easy," if you will,

borrowing from that catchy Eagles song with the same title. I suppose when we explore the "other side of the coin," we become grateful for what we have, for what is there, and exercise compassion regardless of the journey life takes us on.



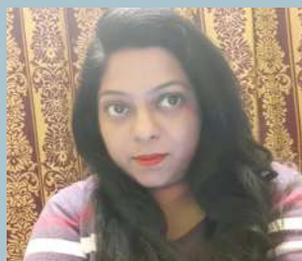
An editor and a musician, Anish Joseph Chacko's interests include singing, songwriting, and composing; reading; outdoor games; and, since the lockdown, the art of meditation for extended hours in bed.

SHIPRA MARK

# Grow a plant everyday



BEFORE THE BREAK OF DAWN,  
bury your sorrows, hurt, and pain  
in the darkness of the night.  
Let the ray of fresh light  
bring you a new beginning  
and nourish the depths of your soul,  
making it fertile to grow once again  
the plants of *love and kindness*.



Shipra, a copyeditor at Newgen, has always been passionate about writing. However, in the past couple of years her journey has been diverse. From editing STEM journals to bringing out dynamic content for academic websites and various blogs, she has seen different facets of content. She is a dedicated and an outgoing person and also a team player. She is also an ardent animal lover and works closely with a local animal rescue group.



L. N A T A R A J A N

Buffalo farming

# Trip to Mysore & Kodachadri

Tour Date: 26–28 January 2019

## Tour Plan:

IN THE MIDST OF OUR BUSY SCHEDULE, THE MEMBERS OF the LWW Team (Deepak, Ganesh, Krishna Kumar, Manigandan Balu aka Mani, Saranraj and me) planned to travel to Kodachadri. We started our planning for the trip 3 months beforehand, in order to accommodate the

budget and to complete commitments. Finally, the much awaited day arrived. We boarded the Shatabdi Express from Chennai Central by 5.45 am, and the train reached Mysore by 1.15 pm.

## Our Tour Starts: Mysore Sight Seeing

Our cab driver Madhu (who knew a little bit of Tamil) was already waiting for us. We first visited the famous Mysore Maharaja Palace,

and after spending two hours there we had our lunch. Then we moved to the KSR Brindavan Garden to witness the evening light magic as many tourists do, but to our dismay, there were only a few lights showing their colours. We stayed at the garden for around two hours. After the Mysore leg of our trip, the main trek plan to Kodachadri began.

### Reaching Kodachadri

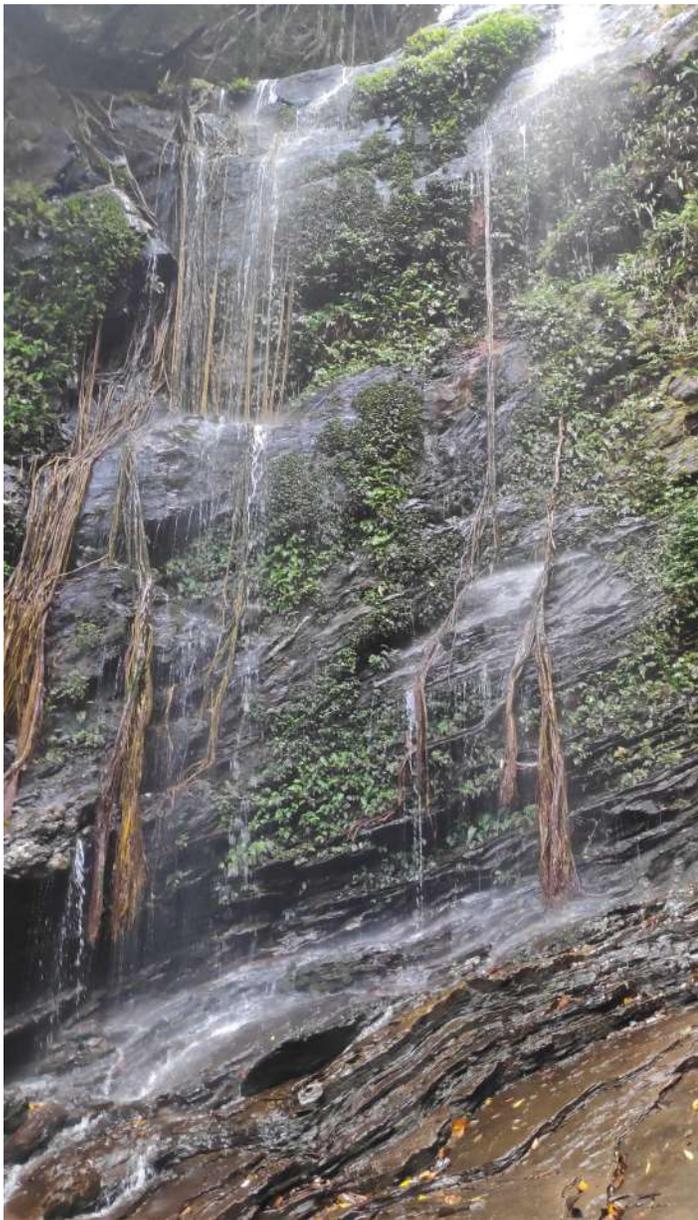
Kodachadri is located in the Shivamogga (or Shimoga) district of Karnataka. If you want to reach Kodachadri by bus, you can book a train to Bangalore or Mysore from Chennai and then take a bus to Kollur Mookambika Temple. From Kollur, you can then hire an auto or taxi to Kattinahole (30 km away).

### Mysore to Kattinahole: A Drive through Mist (240 km from Mysore via Shivamogga)

As planned, we started our night drive by car to Akshaya Home Stay, Kattinahole, the base point to Kodachadri where we had booked our rooms. We had our dinner by 9 pm at a dhaba and tasted their specialty *neer dosai* for the first time, which was delicious. Mani and I had planned to stay awake on a shift basis to keep the driver fresh. Around 3 am we stopped the car for a light refreshment near a roadside tea shop. But our 'little' refreshment turned out to be a heavy one, as we had *suda suda* (piping hot) idly before resuming our journey to Kattinahole. By around 4.30 am, there was fog everywhere, so Madhu had to slow the car. We were moving like a tortoise, and as we were in a



(from left to right) Mani, Deepak, Natarajan (myself), Saranraj, Krishna Kumar and Ganesh.



Hidlumane Falls, Karnataka.

tower-restricted area, our GPS connection was lost. We finally reached Akshaya Home Stay by 6 am.

### **The Much-Awaited Kodachadri Trek (26 km both ways)**

On Sunday, the 27th, after a refreshing breakfast at around 7.30 am, we started with our guide to the Kodachadri peak. There are two ways to reach there: one by road – a complete off-road drive by jeep – and the other,

our favourite, by the trek route. We also came to know that January is the last month for the trek route before it closes; it commences again only from the first week of August (it's better to confirm before getting there). The jeep route is open on all days.

After getting the entry tickets and permission for trekking from the Forest Department, we started our fun-filled and moderate-level trek. Trekking with friends is always fun, and this was a first-time trek for some of them in the group. Equipped with the necessary water bottles, we started climbing slowly and steadily through the trees and slopes with almost 60° inclination. After 3 km, we found a house with a small shop outside; we purchased some snacks and saw farmers and their buffaloes on their fields. It is such a wonderful treat for the eyes as there is greenery everywhere. We enjoyed bathing in the Hidlumane Waterfalls for about an hour on the way, and then we once again started to trek steadily among dense forests. At around 1 pm we reached the jeep route's end point, with many roadside shops; we had our lunch there. From this point, we had to climb 2 km to the peak.

We reached the peak by 2.30 pm. At the Kodachadri peak, there is the Shankara Peetam, also called the Sarvajna Peetam, where Adi Shankara is believed to have prayed to Mookambika Devi. The last 2 km were crowded with visitors, as this is a sacred place.

Our eyes were treated to meadows all around, which filled our souls with fresh air.

After having our fill of the scenery, we started the trek back to the Home Stay and reached around 6.30 pm. After a refreshing hot water bath, we had a nice campfire dinner while talking about the trek.

### Back to Mysore by Car

The next day, the 28th, we made our way back to Mysore, on the way visiting the Mookambika

Temple and Nagara Fort. As we boarded the Cauvery Express at Mysore Railway Station to get back to Chennai, with the sweet memories of the trip, I recalled the famous saying by Michael Kennedy: 'I learn something every time I go into the mountains.'

Anyone interested in learning more about the trip or wanting to make a trip of their own can contact Natarajan at [natarajan.loganathan@newgen.co](mailto:natarajan.loganathan@newgen.co).

Natarajan is a native of Chennai, now residing in Anakaputhur near Pammal. He loves travelling by train and riding a bike the most. He travels once a year with his friends and once again with his family and friends as a group. He prides himself on being a budget traveller without compromising on the quality of food and stays. He is keen to talk to the local people wherever he travels to know more about their culture. He also likes traveling the less beaten path. He



(Cont.)



At Shankara Peetam.



*(clockwise from top)* At Brindavan Gardens, Mysore Palace, & Nagara Fort.

(Cont.)

has a distinct passion for long treks. He has toured 14 states and 4 union territories in India, has also visited some of those places twice, sometimes during the summer and at other times during the winter to get a different feel for the same place. At the top of his bucket list is to visit Leh and Ladakh by road from Delhi and to exit via Srinagar. He hates solo travelling. His favourite place to hang out with friends is Kuthiraivetti (Manjulai Estate) in Thirunelveli district, while Bhutan is his favourite place to visit with his family.

S H E E B A N A R A Y A N A N



# Garlic tomato chutney

Ingredients\*:

*To grind:*

1 medium tomato

15 cloves of garlic, medium sized

8 dry red chillies (or as per taste)

Salt to taste

*To temper:*

2 tbsp gingelly or sesame oil

½ tsp mustard seeds

5 curry leaves

Method: Grind the ingredients under the "to grind" list into a fine paste, adding a little water, if necessary. In a wok, add ingredients listed under "to temper." Once the mustard seeds

splutter, add the ground paste and cook until the oil separates. Cook over a low flame for about 10 minutes. Once the oil separates, transfer the chutney to a container. This chutney can be stored in the refrigerator for about 7 days if a dry spoon is used for serving.

*Happy cooking!*

\*These measurements are for a family for 3. Scale up or down as per your requirement.



Sheeba Narayanan is a recent addition to the Newgen family. She works as a project manager with the Education team.

J A I M E E N A G.

# Healthy snack



## *Ingredients:*

Dates: 30-35 numbers

Mixed nuts: 2 -3 cups (Mix of flax seeds, chia seeds, walnuts, almonds, melon seeds)

Raisins: 2 tablespoons

Clarified butter (ghee): 2-3 teaspoons

## *Method:*

In a pan, dry-roast the flax seeds until they pop and keep them aside. Then, warm the ghee in the same pan and individually roast the melon seeds, almonds, walnuts, dates and raisins. The seeds are to be slightly roasted until you get an aroma, the raisins until they are puffed out and the dates until they are a little soft and glazed. The chia seeds are to be used raw. Cool the ingredients to room temperature and use a food processor or mixer to grind them all to a coarse paste. Grease your palms with a little ghee and shape them into bite-sized balls. Stored in an airtight container at room temperature. They can last up to 1 week. They last longer when refrigerated.



Jaimeena, who works for the marketing team with Anthem Press, has around 19-plus years of diverse work experience. She has a passion for baking and cooking a variety of dishes. Aside from that, she does craftwork.

I hope you enjoy making and eating this healthy nutritious snack!



SPOTLIGHT ON

# S. Priya

SAY HELLO TO S. PRIYA, MANAGING EDITOR OF THE Centralized Journals Copyediting Team. Like a true Chennaiite, she says that there is nothing to hate about Chennai. “I love Chennai not just

because I have been living in this city since 1980—there are more reasons than this. Of course, Chennai is just like any other city with its pros and cons, and it is a city full of old

tales and modern trails. I love its beaches, temples, food, people, and anything and everything about it.”

Priya’s happiest memories are from her childhood days: “For every Pongal, I would visit my grandparents in a small, beautiful village in the southern part of Tamil Nadu.” Some of her pet peeves: people biting their nails, jumping signals, or using mobile phones in places of worship. She also dislikes posters of all sorts stuck on pillars of flyovers.

If Priya could have one superpower, she says, “it would be the ability to talk to animals and plants. I actually want to understand what they think of human beings. I am sure there wouldn’t be anything good they’d be thinking

about us.” If a movie were to be made of her life, Priya would like Sridevi to play her: “If Sridevi had been alive, I would love for her to play my role. She was an incredibly talented and versatile actress. Now, I would like Sneha to play the role.”

*Ponniyin Selvan* by Kalki Krishnamurthy is the best book Priya has read. She adds, “This 5-volume historical masterpiece has the right mixture of all things that make an epic.” She likes drama and thriller novels and movies, but refuses to watch horror and movies with too much violence. “Watching these movies will lead to unnecessary thoughts and feelings,” she comments. She also doesn’t get people’s obsession with Rajinikanth movies and the Indian Premier League (IPL).



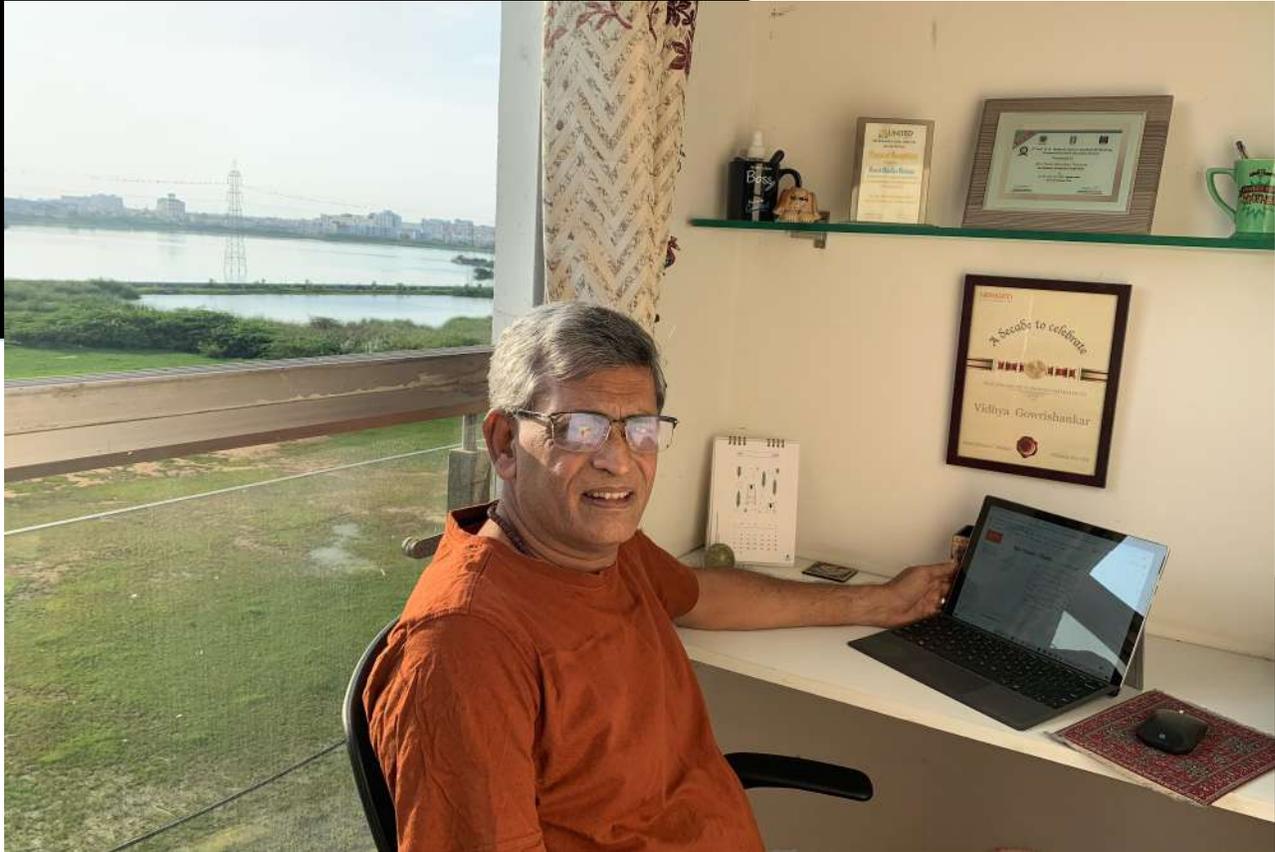
With her father-in-law and husband.

Priya's favorite piece of clothing is a silk saree of her mother's that is more than 45 years old, woven with pure zari threads made of gold. The farthest she's ever been from home is a place, approximately 1,750 km away, called Burdwan in West Bengal. "I had been there while I was doing my MPhil for a paper presentation in a seminar that was held for a week." When asked what her new name would be if she had to change her name, Priya says this: "I have an alias: Sivagnanam or Siva (as my friends call me). So, if I have to change my name, I will change it to Siva."

The top 3 items on her bucket list: to do a course in horticulture and start a nursery, to continue with her veena classes and perform a *kutcheri* (a musical concert) and to learn embroidery. Though she doesn't understand music, Priya loves music. "There are so many songs, from film songs, to devotional songs, to Carnatic songs. I have memorized almost all the songs from Tamil movies from 1990s and 2000s (both Ilaiyaraaja's and A. R. Rahman's compositions)." After a hard day's work, she relaxes by listening to film songs from her playlist.



With her niece and husband.



## SPOTLIGHT ON

# Gowrishankar

GOWRISHANKAR NATESAN, VICE PRESIDENT, CONTRACT Publishing, feels that Chennai is very peaceful and welcoming, and he likes that the pace of life is slower than in other metros. “What I hate about Chennai is that it does not have a great social life,” he says. Gowri is currently working on creating new revenue streams using different product verticals like Nova.

If he could have one superpower, Gowri would like the ability to provide peace of mind

to people. His biggest irrational fear is the fear of failure. While he is proud of the fact that he is always trying to learn new things, Gowri criticizes himself for his flashes of anger. He hates his routine being disturbed and his space being reorganized.

Ratan Tata is his greatest inspiration. Gowri is usually early, and with absolutely no preparation, he can give a presentation on life-survival skills. The first thing he notices



about a person is their eyes. Amassing wealth, property, and so on is something he doesn't get the point of. "I do not understand why this needs to be so important—what we need is a basic amount to lead a comfortable life and maybe a house to live in. Beyond that it does not make sense to me."

Gowri's happiest memory is the birth of his daughter, and he is proud to see her displaying her writing ability and also setting up and running her own small venture.

He has a secret talent of knowing how to restore vintage cars (see the photo of the Fiat he restored from the ground up). Long drives, playing badminton, and watching shows like





*Yes, Prime Minister* are how he recharges, and he would be reading if he didn't have to sleep at all. P. G. Wodehouse's books are some of the best he has read. He is most interested in geopolitical books and movies, and reading physical books is something he likes doing the "old-fashioned" way. If a movie of his life were to be made, Gowri would like Anil Kapoor to play his role. "Chalte Chalte," "Fernando" by ABBA, and "Just the Way You Are" by Bruno Mars are some songs that Gowri has completely memorized. Someday, he would love to travel to Scotland, Egypt, and Turkey. Gowri's take on women's place in today's society: "My philosophy on this has always been that gender has no meaning, and men or women, all have the same talent, skills, etc. Hence equality should be a given and not even open for debate or discussion."



## TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Farewell to Maria Fellows

# Kluwer Law International

A BUSY TEAM THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WITH PLENTY OF projects on hand at all times, the team owes its core strength to the long years of association and experience that the team heads and several members of the project management, copyediting, typesetting, online and manufacturing teams have had with KLI since its founding. “We have bonded beautifully over these years and have become more like a family wherein every member is a star and they exhibit their best at all times,” says the team. “Each one is always there to support the other during the most arduous and demanding

situation, and the lighter moments always manage to trickle in during these times as well from the most cheerful and good-humored members.”

The team’s driving force has been the full freedom to explore individual abilities to achieve the best and to expedite the process without compromising on quality. In spite of the extremely busy schedules and the work-from-home scenario, which is not new to the team, the members always stay connected and have a sense of community through day-to-day interactions with colleagues. With ever-evolving requirements

and aspirations, there have always been truckloads of opportunities to bring out the best from each one in the team.

Formed in 2008, Newgen's Kluwer Law International team (a division of the Wolters Kluwer group), fondly known as the KLI team, works for a client based in the Netherlands. The team manages end-to-end services (including MS chasing) for looseleaves in addition to full service management of books and a few journals.

“Regular client visits have always been fascinating, and it is something that both the

client and the team look forward to every year.” They add with longing: “We will miss it this year, though!”

Women have always been at a higher percentage in the team's workforce, and to add to that, hard work and unique talents from different age groups, educational disciplines, and cultural backgrounds make it a dynamic and skilled team.

When asked about the team's challenges, they say, “Dealing with feedback is always a challenge, and as a team we learn how to avoid and reduce the frequency of making mistakes by following the defined processes. Everyone getting involved in creating processes and tools to avoid repeat errors has helped in implementing them without the sense of being enforced.”





2020 visit - looking forward to receiving you again, Claire :)



Keeping it together - virtually.



"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success"—Henry Ford



Onam folks!



The team members display a sense of pride to be part of a team that gives the freedom to figure out how to achieve a goal instead of being told what has to be done. “With one of the most supportive and friendly clients that one could ever have, we have built a very good relationship with the Wolters

Kluwer colleagues in the Netherlands that revolves around trust, commitment, and reliability.”

The latest service addition to the team is the MS chasing process for nine looseleaves and four smart charts handled efficiently by KLI’s

project management team, with valuable support from Newgen's tech team. MS chasing is done year-round, and the projects are tracked with the help of a chasing dashboard recently built exclusively for this purpose. This has been a great success that the team is extremely proud of as many new projects are now being added to the MS chasing dashboard.

KLI always strives to provide the best quality while successfully meeting targets and publication deadlines without delay. With a close check on productivity and quality during these difficult circumstances caused by the pandemic, the team has achieved commendable results with plenty of positive feedback from authors in the first two quarters of the year.

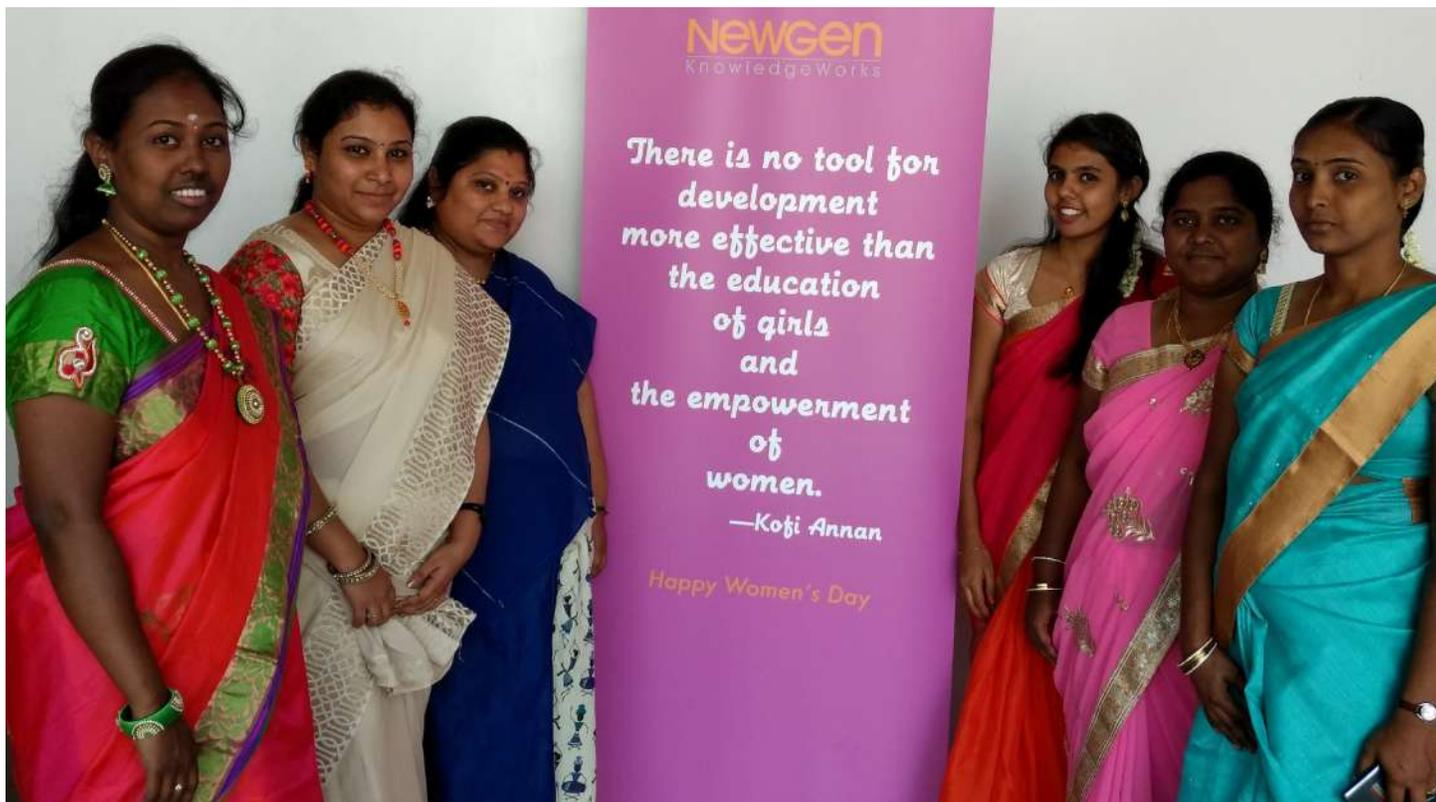
Regular virtual team meetings have allowed the team to stay together while working remotely.

Prior to the pandemic, no matter how busy the year would get, the team members never failed to take time off to celebrate and bond for festivals and birthdays. "It brought us closer and gave us some much-needed break from the busy schedule. Team outings were the most awaited break that everyone looked forward to, whether it was a movie, a day spent at a theme park, or a short vacation to places like Allepey or Yelagiri."

When asked to describe themselves in three words, they say, "It would be hard to do that in just three words, but the top three picks would be Enthusiasm, Competency, and Flexibility."



Dare devils ... on a catamaran.



Empowerment of women: Women's Day.



Christmas and New Year celebration - 2020.

## PRABHAKARAN

## திருவிழாக் காலம்!

பச்சைப் பட்டுத்தி  
பலவண்ணப் பூக்கள்துடி  
அங்கமெலாம் தங்கமென  
அலங்காரப் பரித்தேரில்  
சிங்கமென வீற்றிருக்கும்  
எங்கள் ஊர் அம்மன்தான்  
எத்தனை அழகு !

திருவிழாக்கள் சாமிக்கு மட்டுமா?  
இல்லை இல்லை!  
உள்ளோர்க்கும் இல்லார்க்கும்  
மண்ணோடு மண்ணாக  
பிணைந்திருக்கும் எல்லோர்க்கும்தான்!

வருடத்திற்கொருமுறை  
விஷேசமாய் வரும்  
திருவிழாவிற்குத்தான்  
எத்தனை விடியல்களை  
எண்ணி எண்ணிக் காத்திருக்கும்  
ஏங்கிய விழிகள்!

காற்றுக்குக் கலரடித்து  
சோற்றுக்கு வழிதேடும்  
பலூன்காரன்!

பனிமலை குளிர்ச்சியை  
விரல்நுனி குச்சியில்  
சருக்கென சொருகிடும்  
ஐஸ்வண்டிக்காரன்!

வாழ்க்கைச் சக்கரம்  
நிறுத்தாமல் சுழல  
ராட்டினச் சக்கரம் சுழற்றும்  
ராட்டினக்காரன்!

குறி சொல்லக் காத்திருக்கும்  
குறிஞ்சி நில  
குறத்தி மகள்!

காளையர்கள் கண்சிவக்கத்  
நாவணிப் பட்டாம்பூச்சிகளின்  
கரம்பிடித்து மாட்டிவிடும்  
வளையல்காரன் -- என

விளிம்புநிலை மனிதர்களின்  
உயிரோட்டத்திற்கு  
வேர்பிடித்து நிற்கிறது  
பலத் தேரோட்டம்!

எல்லாத் திருவிழாக்களிலும்  
எல்லோரும் விட்டுச் செல்ல  
எல்லோரும் கொண்டு செல்ல  
ஏதோ ஒன்று இருக்கிறது!

எல்லாத் திருவிழாக்களிலும்  
பதைபதைத் விழியுடனும்  
துடிதுடித்த நெஞ்சுடனும்  
தவறவிட்டக் குழந்தைக்காக  
காத்திருக்கிறாள்  
ஒரு தாய்!

எல்லாத் திருவிழாக்களிலும்  
அழுது அடம்பிடிக்கும் குழந்தைக்கு  
வாங்கித்தர எதுவுமின்றி  
வெறுமையுடன் திரும்புகிறாள்  
இன்னொரு தாய்!

\* The poem resonates the poet's  
longing for the village festival that  
comes once a year, bringing with it a  
riot of colors and celebration: the  
balloon seller, ice cream stand, Ferris  
wheel, fortune teller, bangles stand,  
and the chariot for the deity.



A non-  
believer  
who  
strongly  
believes

in humanity,  
Prabha is the lead  
for XML in the  
Books Preediting  
Team. Aside from  
writing beautiful  
poetry, he loves  
music composed by  
Ilaiyaraaja, which  
he claims is enough  
for everything.





NANDAVANAM

# Disability Awareness Program 2020

BALAJI MOHAN

Medico-social worker, Nandavanam

DECEMBER 3 IS OBSERVED AS WORLD DISABILITY DAY internationally to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons

with disabilities. Nandavanam Center for Healing Education has been celebrating this day in the past years in a very special way by conducting inclusive beach walking and traditional beach games in Chennai beaches to promote the benefits of barefoot beach walking, a free, therapeutic modality that benefits all, especially people with disabilities.

Thousands of children across Chennai have been a part of this special event every year. In this current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nandavanam commemorated World Disability Day by conducting (1) an experiential disability awareness program for school children in Tamil Nadu and (2) a webinar on ‘Therapeutic Benefits of Barefoot Beach Walking’ for the general public.

### **Experiential Disability Awareness Program**

The aim of the program was to reach out to as many school children as possible virtually and to create an understanding of disability and a feeling of empathy in children. The staff spent 30 minutes each with a small group of children from various schools. The children were made aware of various abilities and skills each individual possesses and how a person feels if he or she is lacking in those skills/abilities. The children were asked to blindfold themselves and draw a picture on the theme ‘The Beach’ and to share their experience. These interactive sessions were really astounding as the children shared their thoughts on how they experienced blindness. Many of the children were emotional and shared that they will extend their helping hands to their schoolmates with ‘less abilities’. The children were also encouraged to draw or sketch ‘The Beach’ with their eyes open and share their stories or poems with others. We also emphasized the benefits of barefoot beach

walking to the children during these sessions. Over 1,200 children from about 20 schools across Tamil Nadu benefited from these awareness program held between the 3 and 21 December 2020.

“This experience was different for me. When I closed my eyes it was really difficult to draw a picture, but after removing the cloth I saw my drawing was really bad, then I realized the difficulty of the blind people. When I was blindfolded I felt some shivering and my mind was blank. Then, however, I managed to draw something. I knew that it was not my drawing. I couldn't even think of a life without any one of my body parts. The people with serious disabilities are also leading a normal life; when I think about this I feel proud of them. I feel that no one should have such disabilities. I realized the pain of such people and I want to help them as much as I can. Thank you.”

– Janani, Infant Jesus Matric. Hr. Sec.  
School, Tirupattur

“Before the camp, I was curious to know about it and while attending the camp I was able to know and understand the feelings and the difficulties of disabled people and I learned how their difficulties can be

reduced. I will try my best to help them with my affection and render whatever small help I can. Thank you."

- Shreeshivani, St. Gabriel's Hr. Sec. School, George Town, Chennai

"While I was drawing my imagination with a blindfold it was impossible for me. I wasn't able to identify the place where I started my drawing and also I just ended it in a different place. And I wasn't able to draw neatly. I drew using touch sense and I also felt I was using oil pastels with the texture. I understand the feeling of the visually impaired and these people are indeed great! We cannot even do a single drawing without our vision, they are great. Thank you."

- P. Akshayaa, Fatima Matric. Hr. Sec. School, Kodambakkam, Chennai



It was a wonderful opportunity that we could touch many children's lives in a short period as the program was conducted virtually. Google Meet, Zoom, and LMS were the common event platforms for the awareness program.

**R A G H A V A N R.**

**Physiotherapist, Nandavanam**

### Webinar on "Therapeutic Benefits of Barefoot Beach Walking"

Every year we celebrate World Disability Day by introducing and encouraging barefoot beach walking as a therapeutic activity. The program begins with children from various schools across Chennai gathering on the beach, holding placards detailing the benefits of beach walking. They then start walking barefoot on the sand for close to 20 minutes. The children then hold hands and perform this exercise.

The physical event was not practically preferable this year due to the pandemic. Team Nandavanam then had an opportunity to make the program possible on online platforms. The program was planned as a webinar on Zoom. It was held on December 5, 2020, 6.00 pm IST. We also had a live telecast on the Nandavanam Facebook page where hundreds of people watched the webinar.

The webinar started with Micky Joseph introducing the work done by Nandavanam, the panelists, and about World Disability Day. The panelists were Preetha Srinivasan, the managing trustee of Nandavanam; Dr. Veera Panch, mentor and medical consultant at Nandavanam; and Sathish Kumar.

Sathish Kumar was awarded the Nandavanam Outstanding Achiever Award 2020. He is a social activist who does scuba diving and paragliding and is also an event organiser for persons with disabilities for boccia tournaments. He is himself a quadriplegic with cerebral palsy and is currently employed with the Union Bank of India. He shared his extremely inspirational life story. He also shared a video presentation about boccia. (Boccia is an adaptive precision ball sport, similar to bocce, and related to bowls and pétanque.)

To Dr. Veera Panch:

***Q: How did you discover the therapeutic effects of barefoot beach walking?***

Before entering into the conversation, Dr. Panch presented video documentaries of three students from Nandavanam. Parents, teachers, and therapists also shared their experiences in the videos. From this, Dr. Panch shared her ideology of an accidental experiment which turned into a successful therapeutic intervention. Some of the benefits of barefoot beach walking are

- improvement in sitting tolerance
- reduced restlessness
- improved core muscle strength
- improved balance
- initiation of speech
- better body and mind coordination
- improved muscle tone, among others.

***Q: Is there any duration or distance one should walk to see an improvement?***

A: A minimum of 45 min to 1 hour 5 times a week. Make it a lifestyle habit.

***Q: What is the perfect time to walk on the beach?***

A: Any time of the day is good enough because the time factor should not be a deterrent. But preferably 11 am to 12 noon is perfect and efficient.

***Q: Can people with locomotor disability benefit from this?***

A: Yes, start walking slowly with assistance and you will become independent. Do the activity with more enthusiasm.

***Q: If there is no beach nearby, are there any alternatives we can find?***

A: There is no alternative equivalent to this as the gravitational pull in the beach sand during a walk is unmatched to anyplace else. River sand or sand at the playground is not enough. The sand also gives acupressure to your foot.

***Q: Should walking on the beach be done on dry sand or closer to the water? Which is more effective?***

A: Walking on dry sand is advisable.

The webinar ended with a vote of thanks by Preetha Srinivasan. We, the team at Nandavanam, enjoyed the journey of celebrating World Disability Day amidst this pandemic.

The only thing worse than being blind is having sight with no vision.

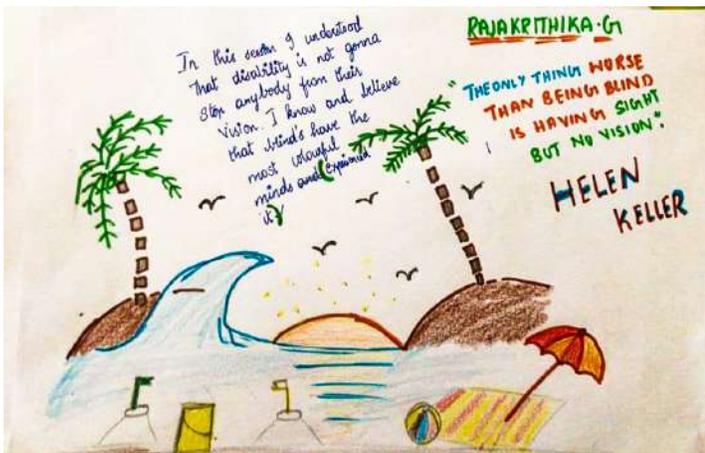
~ Helen Keller



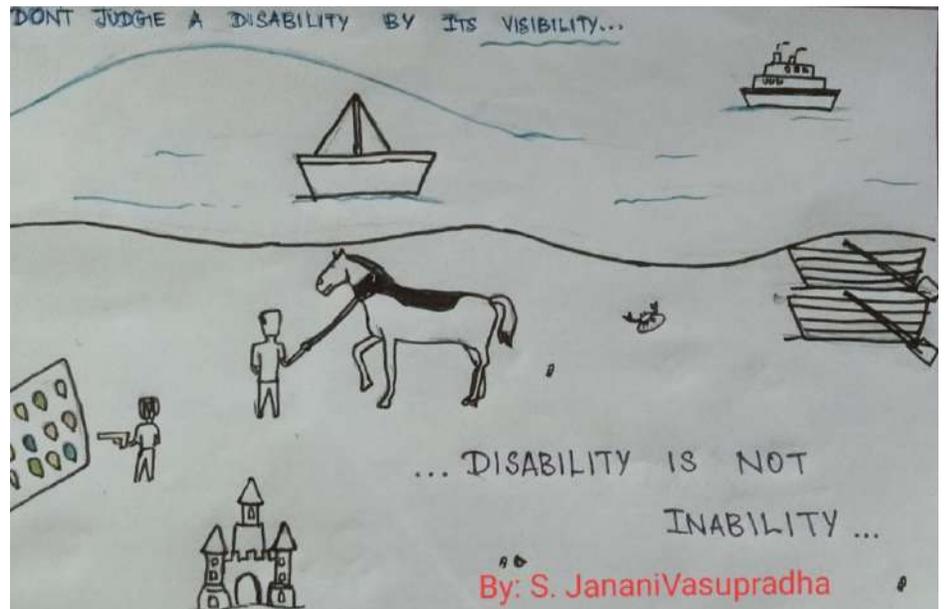
Santosh's parents talking to Dr. Veera Panch via Zoom.



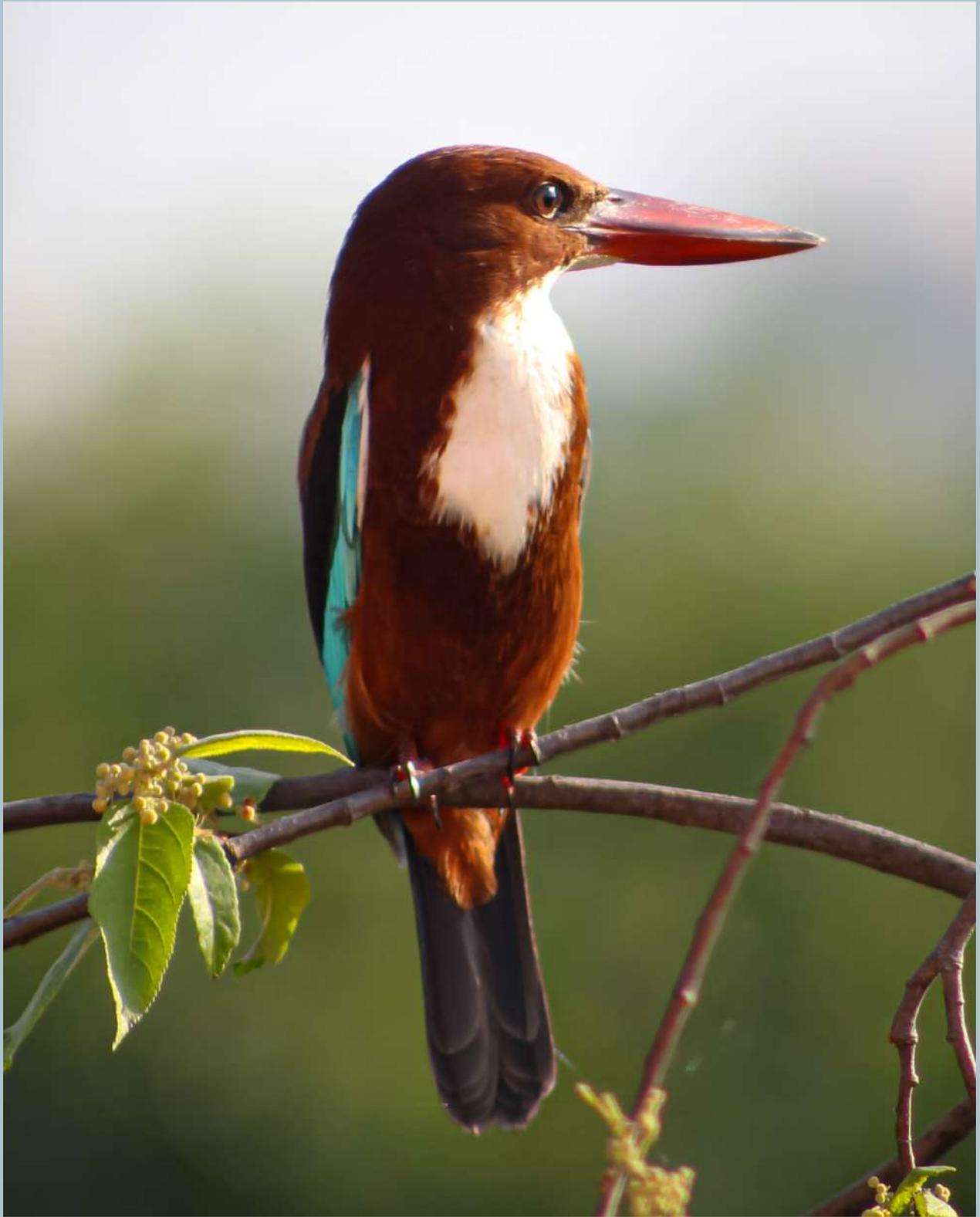
Deepan Raj's parents accompanying him on a barefoot beach walk.



Artwork done by the children of Nandavanam Center of Excellence for Children with Developmental Challenges for World Disability Day.



**World Disability Day: Dec 3**



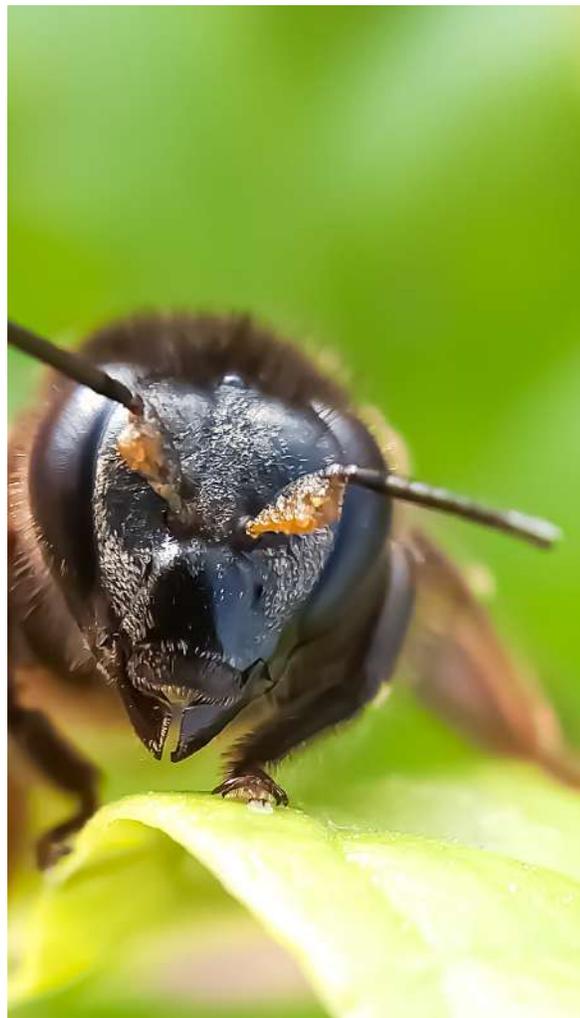
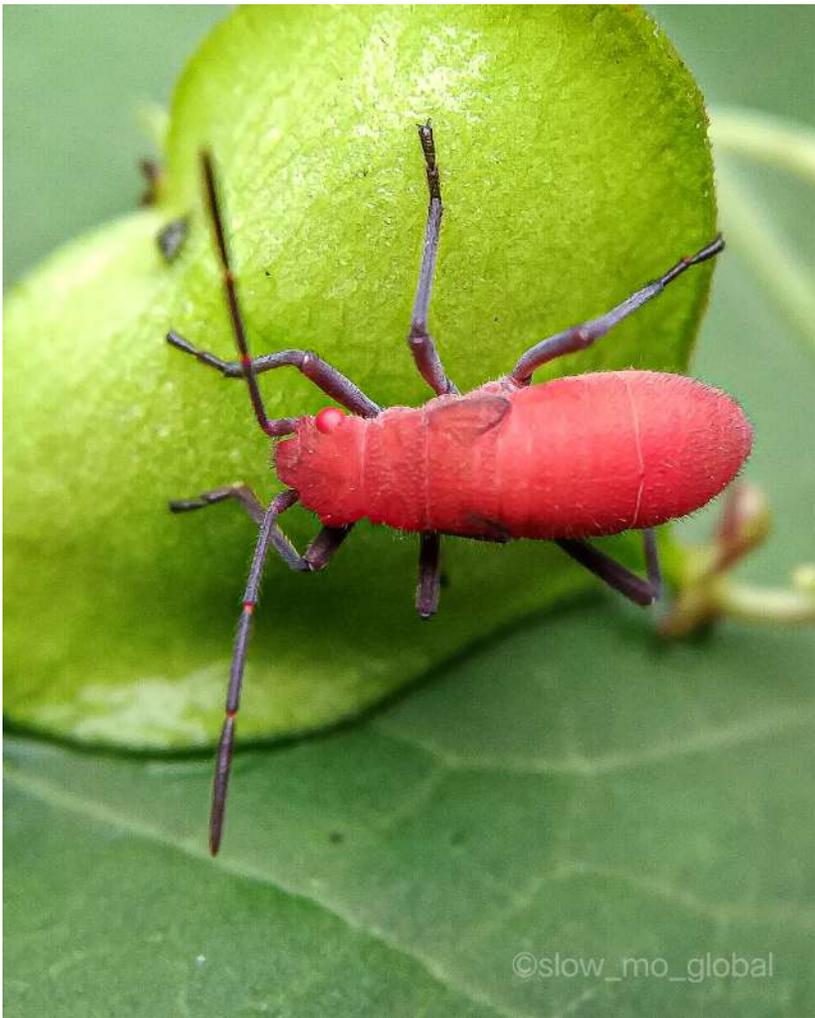
hobbies | PHOTOGRAPHY

SUNDARAMOORTHY

# A {shutter} bug's life



Sundaramoorthy has been a part of the Newgen family for 8 years now. He is a senior lead in the Technology team. During the COVID lockdown, he discovered his passion for photography. While he claims he's not a professional photographer, his photos say otherwise. His interests include traveling, playing carrom, cricket, football, badminton, volleyball, and photography.





B I B I C H R I S T A X A V I E R

# Waves...\*

## Beaches . . . Hopes renewed

A NEW YEAR . . . THE DAWN OF A NEW DECADE . . . THE word ‘resolution’ appears as a blur in the mirage . . . hope lingers on the horizon as the heavily laden wave of 2020 from its long-driven elliptical motion rises, steepens, curls over, breaks and swashes over humanity on the shores of 2021.

Have we been pounded? Do we just lap on the shore or curl over and dissolve into the foam? Do we wash over sand and rocks? Or do we recede into the ocean as backwash and churn in the quagmire of the turbulent deeps?

Or, do we bask on the pristine sands of the new beach, energized by the warmth of the rising sun and the breath of fresh air, walk on and explore the new world that awaits us on the shores and beyond?

The choices we pick and the decisions we make are the ones that define us. To shake off the sands of life overburdening us and walk on.

.....  
*\* Photo courtesy of Ashokumar.*

Ashok shot this beautiful picture while on an early morning run at Marari Beach, Kerala.

This life, and the world we live in, is an unforgiving stage! We reap what we sow, and what goes around comes around. But life offers us endless possibilities for change. The change the world so badly needs.

The 'Yes We Can' and 'Change We Need' from the Obama campaign are words that should empower us in our everyday life. The power of those words to inspire change in a nation and lead and carry forward the journey of a race from its centuries of struggle and oppression to victory beyond belief is symbolic!

Although we squirm in our everyday life and battle the daily ups and downs, a look beyond the screen through which we see the world with renewed life and possibilities should inspire us to take the lead to walk with determined steps, to explore and enjoy new life, never to be stained or marred by words or deeds and leave clean footprints on the pristine sands of life. Such, and many more such, thoughts can lead us with renewed hope for change and not allow us to be pulled and sucked into the backwash of the waves.



Bibi likes to read books connected to life, realities, and political issues. She is an ardent reader of autobiographies. She enjoys long walks to the beat and rhythm of beautiful music, loves people and manwatching, loves writing and editing, and destresses after a stressful job by channeling her energies into baking. Whether it is a solo drive up the mountains and back (from where she lives, it's quite close) or a good laugh on anything with her son Rohan or her friends, she's able to strike a perfect balance between work and life!

## K. SUGANIYA

என் மூச்சுக்காற்றின் திசை வைத்து  
நான் தவறு செய்கிறேனா என உணர்வாய்!

உன் மகளாய் பிறந்து, மகாராணியாய்  
வளர்ந்தேன்.

என்னை அன்போடும், அரவணைப்போடும்  
வழிநடத்தியவன் - நீ!

உன் நிழலில் இளைப்பாறிய நாட்களை  
மீண்டும் மன்றாடுகிறேன் அந்த  
இறைவனிடம்!

நித்தமும் உன் நினைவில்...

தன்னிகரில்லா தகப்பனின் மகள் - சுகன்யா

## அன்புள்ள அப்பா!!!\*



Suganiya is someone with a positive attitude and a colourful mind. She is by nature friendly. Her interests lie craft work and in writing Tamil poems based on her own experiences.



\* A daughter's tribute to her father.

FATIMA ANSARI

# Ode to medical professionals

*(the junior-most ones)*

I HAVE NOT RESTED SINCE . . .

I have been in a continuous grind –  
Studying, treating patients, dealing with  
seniors, managing families of patients

I have been in the dock

Working like a hock

My life akin to that of a soldier

To be celebrated and immortalized in poems

To be tarnished and discarded in real

Shower some petals, clap some more

I continue to bleed some more

My problems bother no one any more

While I work for the nation, I need –

A place to stay, a means to commute

Some food to eat, a little time to rest

Some hygiene, maybe

Time to study for exams

A little understanding

It's not me that is exploiting patients for  
money

I am myself a victim of the so-called system  
that is making health care a business

Yet, tarnished stands my name

So go on, no harm in clapping today

You can curse another day

Celebration is easy

Living my life is queasy

Shower some petals, clap some more

For I continue to bleed some more



A lawyer by profession, Fatima's first love is writing. A published author herself, she would love to write books such as *Homework for*

*Grown-Ups*. Currently, she enjoys reading children's fiction with her toddlers. Eric Carle's *The Tiny Seed* holds a special place on her bookshelf.