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From the President's Desk . . .

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Dear (s) Another year has fled past. Though for a service minded organization, the no. of years are not as significant as what we have been able to contribute to the society over the years.

In the last year we lost a few dedicated volunteers and we hope that such untimely demises do not repeat. We mourn the unfortunate and untimely deaths of KN Muralidharan and our founder secretary K Soundararajan. We pray to the Almighty for peace to the departed souls and to give succour and courage to the family of the bereaved.

Bharat Ratna – meaning Jewel of India or Gem of India is the highest civilian award, awarded for the highest degrees of national service. This service includes artistic, literary, and scientific achievements, as well as recognition of public service of the highest order. The award was established by the first President of India, Rajendra Prasad, on January 2, 1954. The original statute did not make allowance for posthumous awards and this perhaps explains why the decoration was never awarded to Mahatma Gandhi, though this provision was added in the January 1955 statute. Subsequently, there have been ten posthumous awards, including the award to Subhash Chandra Bose in 1992, which was later withdrawn due to a legal technicality, the only case of an award being withdrawn. Of late all the political parties have been clamouring for this coveted award for their netas.

Pammal Sankara Eye Hospital has been rendering yeomen service to the society with slogan "miracles cannot cure the blind but together we can". They have conducted more than 1 lakh free cataract surgeries to the rural poor and we commend their achievement. We have a write up on their activities.

Down under, India lost the first test miserably in less than 4 days and the next at Sydney turned out to be a melting pot of controversies. It was rocked by the poor standard of umpiring inflicting crushing blows, which included the third umpire who has the benefit of technology at hand. Added was the furore of racist allegation. Earlier, the centurion Symonds was clearly dismissed twice before reaching 50. But the team folding under 71 overs in the dramatic last hour was a palpable debacle.

Technology has revolutionised many sports disciplines but none of them had the same scope as cricket as the concept of third umpires and the lights keeping the suspense going enhancing the dramatic effect for the audience. So, when the facility to improve judgment and get a more accurate result is available, that must be put to use. Perhaps some bold decisions empowering the third umpire becomes the need of the day. **With Pongal Greetings** **-T.J.Ramani**

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HOSPITAL WITH A RARE VISION

Their service line is “ Miracles Cannot Cure the Blind But Together We Can”. Sri Sankara Nagar in the outskirts of Pallavaram is an inspiring example. More than the schools administered by Sankara Trust, what catches eye is the hospital, a free dispensary for the poor and the massive eye hospital. This eye hospital has progressed by leaps and bounds. From very humble beginnings, Sankara Eye Hospital serves the needs of people not only in Pammal, but has covered the majority of villages in Chinglepet. The medicare and the education facilities have all been put up over the years from donations received from philanthropic institutions and individuals.

“Kannoli-Vision Saver”, a rural out-reach eye care program, was launched in December 1994 in Sri Sankara Health Centre, Pammal. This Centre was later converted into an exclusive high-tech ophthalmic hospital. This hospital performs Small Incision Cataract Surgery (SICS) with Intra-ocular Lens (IOL). Kannoli - Vision Saver is a unique programme on Eye care. Rather it is a mission with zeal - A mission to eradicate Blindness in elders - A mission to give vision to the needy and poor folk to bring light in the rural elder’s lives.

India is not only the diabetic capital but has an unenviable record in eye related illness. It is reported that each year, four million people in the country suffer from cataract. The statistics are even more numbing - one- fifth of the world’s blind are in India.

This Great Hospital ensures that every Sunday, their van goes to a village and screen villagers for providing free cataract surgeries. By the afternoon they fill their van and return the hospital before dusk. The patients are then fed and housed in a spacious ward.

Within three days, all of them are operated on, supplied free dark glasses and dropped back at their village. After two weeks, it is their responsibility to come back to the hospital and obtain free spectacles, if necessary. When the happy patients return, they invariably bring some gifts for the hospital in the form of rice, vegetables or fruit.

The hospital is very well equipped with all modern equipments. The Hospital welcomes everyone for a visit and spread this message amongst their friends and relatives both in middle and higher income groups to avail the services. The Hospital also appeals for the generous support to create an endowment of Rs.10,000/- or multiples thereof on the Birthday / Wedding day / in remembrance of their near and dear. The interest accrued will be utilized

for one or more free surgery to poor patients. SYMA is proud to be associated with this noble institution and we have been organizing eye camp on the Independence Day every year.

Recently, Pammal Sankara Eye Hospital organized a group meeting of village volunteers on the achievement of more than ONE LAKH FREE CATARACT surgeries to the rural poor. PRO Sri J Babu welcomed the volunteers; Secretary S Visvanathan explained about the activities and facilities in the hospital. Special Guest Sri Sridharan motivated everyone with his lecture on service quoting from heritage. All the village volunteers were honoured with a certificate and memento. SYMA office bearers attended the meeting and greeted the hospital authorities with a memento.

BLISS appreciates the invaluable services of this Organisation.

Call 1913 to register civic complaints

One of the oldest Civic bodies dating back to 1688, the Chennai Corporation moved a big way in resolving civic complaints by launching a four digit helpline 1913. this will enable people register their complaints regarding civic amenities. The number bears significance for Chennai as Ripon Building, the Corporation’s headquarters, was inaugurated in 1913.

Whilst this is certainly laudable, another emergency service is facing avoidable problems. The all important Fire Dept. is facing problems as they repeatedly are irritated with calls of a private telecom operator. This results that calls are not taken with alarm but irritation. It is reported that callers seeking recharge for SIM or new caller tune dial Fire Emergency no. of 101 due to identical no. that Airtel subscribers are required to dial.

Many subscribers, instead of dialling *101* followed by the recharge code and a hash (#), dial only 101 to ask for a recharge or caller tunes or even to lodge complaints about the service. Fire department officials aren’t amused. The officials who wait for emergency calls are flooded with nuisance calls. It is time that Airtel attends to this immediately and have their no. changed immediately.

Q: Test commencing on Boxing day is common occurrence for Aussies. The First test of the Border Gavaskar Test which commenced on the Boxing day was significant for Saurav, as it was his 100th test. Besides this, this Test which Aussies won by a huge margin of 337 runs, was significant for the ground as well. Do you know how ? **Ans in Pg 4**

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A BANKING PROFESSIONAL

A Golden opportunity is virtually knocking at your doorsteps providing an excellent chance to become a banking professional in near future by passing a diploma in Banking & Finance (DBF). This is a six months course offered by the Indian Institute of Banking & Finance.

IIBF established in 1928 is a professional body conducting various courses meant for bank employees across the country. Though the Institute has been conducting these courses exclusively for its members, a new course devised to induct quality professionals in the banking industry is now thrown open to any aspiring graduates. The Institute claims it as an entry level professional qualification for Graduates aspiring for a career in Banking and Finance industry. Banking industry will be recruiting lots of young graduates in the near future and in the years thereafter, to replenish the vacancies created by the retiring employees.

The Institute offers this course in association with Manipal Universal Learnings P Ltd who will take care of registration, dispatch of course materials and conduct the examinations. The eligibility criteria is a graduate in any discipline or above from any University recognized by UGC or students appearing for final year graduation. The registration for course will be in two stages. First will be course enrolment for which the fees are Rs.3200/- and the next will be examination registration paying fee of Rs.1800-

The syllabus for the diploma is designed to cover the gamut of industry relevant topics and are devised to be : 1) Principles and Practices of Banking 2) Accounting & Finance for bankers and 3) Legal & Regulatory aspects of Banking operations

The examination will be conducted twice a year and will be conducted in English. They will be conducted both on line and off line mode; The passing criteria is – minimum 50% or more marks in aggregate with 45% or more in individual attempts. Candidates have to pass all the three papers in a single attempt. Repeaters need to re-register for the examination and appear for all the papers. All the successful candidates will be ranked in order of merit.

The courseware is specifically developed by the Institute and it is expected that the candidates will have a smooth transition into the banking and finance industry after passing the diploma as illustrated here :

- 1) Join DBF with graduation (as also those expecting their final year results)
- 2) Pass DBF and join the Banking & Finance industry
- 3) Become member of the Institute, get exemption from JAIB, qualifying as JAIB
- 4) Progress to CAIB.

The Institute will host on its website a brief resume with photo of all the successful candidates. Member banks will select from this website for their requirements.

Get prepared to join DBF and become a qualified banking professional. This indeed is a rare opportunity to join the banking industry at an young age of 21 and you can scale ambitious heights of GM and beyond in future.

Should you require further information on this – visit the website of Indian Institute of Banking & Finance : www.iibf.org.in

SYMA members and residents of Triplicane can have first hand information about the course from : Shri V Govindarajan (Bank of India) on telephone at 28447688 @ 9443985189 (M) on Sundays between 4 to 6 pm after 20th Jan 2008.

BLISS thanks Shri Govindarajan for the useful information and appreciates the spirit of Govindarajan in coming forward to offer assistance. We hope to see more banking professionals soon.

Let us make INDIA POLIO FREE

In rural India, one could often see children afflicted and crippled by Polio. These disabled children face some of the fiercest forms of discrimination today, limiting employment and educational opportunities. Poliomyelitis, often called polio or infantile paralysis is a highly infectious disease caused by a virus poliovirus. It invades the nervous system and can cause total paralysis in a matter of hours. There is no cure for polio, but the disease can be prevented by immunization with polio vaccine.

The incidence of polio has been reducing and the country had almost eradicated the dreaded disease through various initiatives. Unfortunately, India was one of the 11 countries where the polio infection was reported during 2007. It is also one of the endemic zones for polio transmission along with Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and accounted for nearly 50 per cent of the 925 cases reported globally last year. Some cases were reported in the capital as well as in nearby UP and Bihar.

The World Health Organisation is confident that the disease can be eradicated from India within two years. The Govt. has vigorously launched Pulse Polio Immunisation programme. The first round of polio drops was administered on Jan 6, 2008 and will be repeated on Feb. 10 across the country. The success of the PPI that has made Tamil Nadu a frontrunner in immunisation coverage owes chiefly to the diligence of volunteers and widespread people's participation.

Let us all vow to eradicate the crippling disease and future children should never even again know the crippling effects of polio.

நினைவில் நிற்கும் செயல்வீரர் சௌந்தரராஜன்

நமது சங்கம் துவங்க முக்கிய காரணமாகவும், துவக்க வருடத்தில் செயலாளராகவும் இருந்த திரு. கே. சௌந்தரராஜன் (எ) ஜெயராமன் (52) அண்மையில் மரணமடைந்தது நம்மை துன்பத்தில் ஆழ்த்தியுள்ளது. திருவல்லிக்கேணி ஸ்ரீபார்த்தசாரதி திருக்கோவிலை சுற்றியுள்ள பகுதிகளை தூய்மையாக வைத்து பொதுமக்களுக்கு நற்பண்புகளை பரப்புவதற்கு ஒரு இயக்கம் தேவை என உணர்ந்து தனது நண்பர்களுடன் கலந்தாலோசித்து இதற்கு செயல்படிவம் கொடுத்து 'சைமா' ஒரு பேரியக்கமாக வளர வித்திட்டார். துவங்கிய ஆண்டு செயலர் பொறுப்பை ஏற்றுக் கொண்டு பல இடர்களுக்கிடையில் சைமாவின் வளர்ச்சிக்குக் காரணமாக ஒரு மிகச்சிறந்த நிர்வாகியாக பரிணமித்தார். பொருள் பலமும், பண்பலமும், இயக்க பலமும் குறைவாக இருந்த காலகட்டத்தில் இவர் போன்றவர்கள் மிக ஆர்வத்துடன் செயல்பட்டது திருவல்லிக்கேணி பொதுமக்களின் கவனத்தை சங்கத்தின் பால் ஈர்த்தது. இத்தகைய பலமான அடித்தளம்தான் நாம் இன்று சிறப்பாக பணிபுரிய உதவியுள்ளது. சங்கம் ஆரம்பித்த புதிதில் இங்கிலாந்து உலகக் கோப்பை கிரிக்கெட் அணிக்கு கேப்டனாக நியமிக்கப்பட்ட திரு. எஸ். வெங்கட்ராகவனுக்கு ஒரு பாராட்டு விழா நடத்தத் தீர்மானித்தபோது பலர் அது மிகக்கடினம் எனக்கூறியும், நினைத்ததை முடித்தே தீருவோம் என பலருடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டு அந்த விழாவை மிகச்சிறப்பாக நடத்திக் காட்டினார்.

மற்றொரு சமயம் நமது சங்கத்திற்கு நிதி திரட்ட திரு. ஓய்.ஜி. பார்த்தசாரதி குழுவினரின் 'பரீட்சைக்கு நேரமாச்சு' நாடகத்திற்கு அனைத்து வழிகளிலும் திட்டமிட்டு சிறப்பாக செயல்படுத்தினார். தனது சிறுவயதில் பள்ளி மாணவர்களுக்கு கணிதம், மற்றும் ஆங்கில வகுப்புகள் இலவசமாக எடுத்தார். எப்பொழுதும் இன்முகத்துடனும், அடங்காத ஆர்வத்துடனும், பேசும் அனைத்து நண்பர்களிடமும், சங்கத்தைப் பற்றி பேசி நாம் வளர அடிகோலினார். புத்தாண்டு பிறந்து ஜனவரி 4ம் தேதி அன்று அருள்மிகு பார்த்தசாரதி திருக்கோவிலுக்கு வந்திருந்தவர் திடீர் மாரடைப்பினால் அவர் விரும்பிய பெருமாளிடம் சேர்ந்தார். அன்னாரது மறைவில் வாடி நிற்கும் அவரது இரு மகன்களுக்கும், துணைவியாருக்கும் எமது ஆழ்ந்த இரங்கலைத் தெரிவித்து கொள்கிறோம். அவரது குடும்ப நலத்திற்காக இறைவனை வேண்டுகிறோம்.

அவர் இறப்பதற்கு சில நாட்கள் முன்பு நமது சங்கத்தலைவரை சந்தித்த போது நமது இதழின் தரத்தையும், அதில் வரும் விஷயங்களையும் பாராட்டியது நினைவில் நிற்கின்றது. சமீப காலமாக பல சிறுவயது இழப்புகளை சந்தித்துக் கொண்டு இருக்கிறோம். இது போன்ற துயரங்கள் இனி நடவாமல் இருக்க இறைவனை வேண்டுகிறோம்.

Ans: The test at Melbourne Cricket Ground, Jolimont, Melbourne, Victoria was very significant. The Melbourne Cricket Club has a history of being first. It was the first club in Victoria (1838) and hosted the first match between Victoria and New South Wales in 1856.

The first Test between Australia and England was played during Mar 15-19, 1877. For the records, Alfred Shaw bowled the first Test delivery to Charles Bannerman, who went on to become the first Test centurion. Hill had both the first Test wicket and the first catch. Midwinter picked up the first 5 wicket haul, and Blackham had the first stumping.

The first ever ODI was also played on the very same ground. Significantly, Test no. 1855 – the 1st Test of the present series was the 100th Test played at this Ground. Incidentally, VVS's innocuous nudge to square leg off Mitchell Johnson on Day 4 was the 100,000th Test run scored at Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

உறுப்பினர்களிடமிருந்து செய்திகள், துணுக்குகள் உபயோகக் குறிப்புகள் வரவேற்கப்படுகின்றன.

அணுக வேண்டிய முகவரி : **சைமா BLISS**

சைமா மெடிக்கல் சென்டர்

29, துளசிங்க பெருமாள் கோயில் தெரு
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வருந்துகிறோம்

நமது சங்க உறுப்பினர் திரு கே.என். முரளிதரன் (45) 16.12.2007 அன்று இயற்கை எய்தினார். அன்னாரின் மறைவுக்கு BLISS தனது ஆழ்ந்த இரங்கலைத் தெரிவிக்கிறது.

To _____

