

SEPTEMBER 2019

MUZIRIS NEWS

Past Perfect, Present Continuous



CONSERVE HERITAGE

Pallippuram fort, mentioned in western records as ‘Palliport’, was constructed by the Portuguese in 1507. Also known as ‘Ayakkotta’ or ‘Alikkotta’, the fort then served the purpose of a watchtower. Canons and guns were placed on all sides. The structure had three wooden floors fixed probably on a wooden pillar placed in the centre of the structure, and a slope roof.

Now a protected monument under the Department of Archaeology, the relics of this fort in Pallippuram, Ernakulam, stands as a bastion of three stories in height .

PALLIPPURAM FORT
THIS HEXAGONAL BUILDING IS THE OLDEST EXTANT PORTUGUESE MONUMENT IN INDIA. IT WAS CONSTRUCTED BY THE PORTUGUESE IN 1507. IT IS ALSO KNOWN AS AYAKKOTTA OR ALIKKOTTA. IN 1663 THE PORTUGUESE SURRENDERED THE FORT TO THE DUTCH ABOUT 1789. THE FORT WAS PURCHASED BY THE DUTCH IN 1663. THE KERALA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY.

message



Dear friends,

Our state of Kerala is renowned worldwide for its great cultural, educational, technological and scholarly achievements. Together with that, we celebrate a history of rich heritage and tradition. Different communities have lived here in harmony.

Muziris Projects Ltd., functioning from the Muziris International Research and Convention Centre, Pullut, Kodungallur, has tried to showcase all of these through its various museums, historic sites and other landmarks. Anyone visiting Muziris is left with a remarkably rich mosaic of heritage and conservation aspects, stretching over 2000 years or more.

We have had the opportunity to extend our activities in heritage conservation to various Panchayats of the region. We are impressed that we now have 12 Panchayats and two Municipalities, spread across two districts, to widen the scope of our project. Conservation, infrastructure development, construction of boat jetties, museums for learning, and academic and educational exchanges are being encouraged so far.

Next month, we will mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The Alappuzha Heritage Project conceives the Mahatma Gandhi museum as an appropriate, befitting tribute to the Father of the nation. Added to that will be the museums on the Labour movement, Yarn and Coir.

Let us also make sure that we keep our region clean and green and take part in the 'Clean Muziris Green Muziris' campaign.

Most importantly, the Muziris project belongs to the people here, and as people who care deeply about our land, let us build a model, right here, for cultural tourism.

Before I conclude, in the light of the deluge across the state, we have a duty to remember our fellow beings who have lost their homes and land or have been displaced by the floods and landslides. Let us do everything possible to help the people and maintain a vigil against the incessant rains.

Thank you all,

Kadakampally Surendran

Minister for Tourism, Government of Kerala.



Launch of 'Karkuzhali'

An anthology of Jewish songs

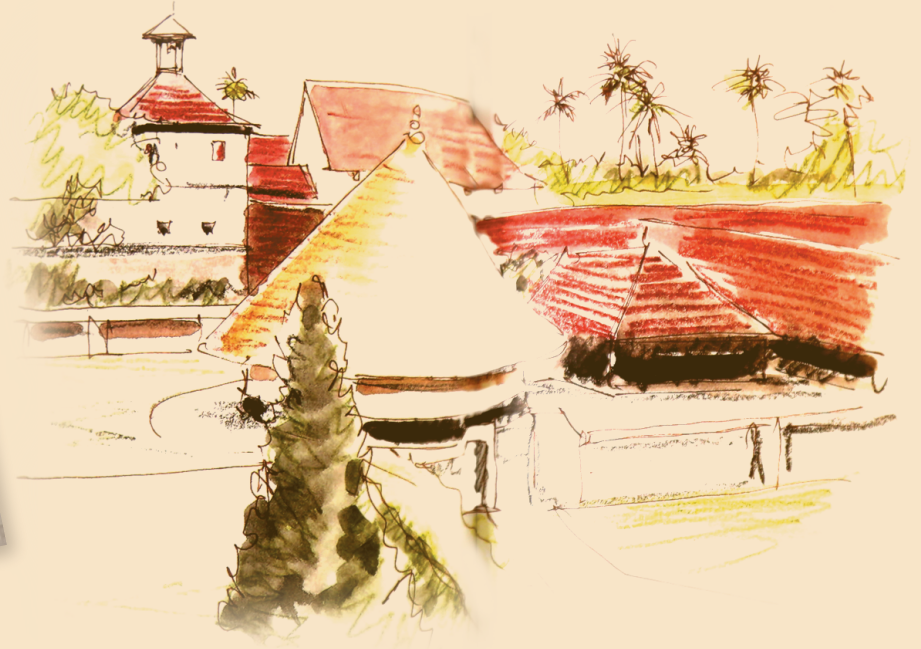
'Karkuzhali', is an anthology of Jewish women's songs in Jewish Malayalam. Also, known as "pennpattukal/ kilipattukal", this collection of songs are composed by people from a different time period and sung by the women.

Compiled by one of the eminent academic Prof. Scaria Zakaria, the book has a collection of folksongs collected over 30 years. The folk songs were sung in Malayalam with a generous admixture of Hebrew and Tamil. Prof Zakaria has made profound contributions to the area of Jewish Malayalam studies, and revitalized the fading cultural memories of Kerala. The book is published by Kerala State Institute of Children's Literature, Thiruvananthapuram.

In the words of Prof Zakaria, "Karkuzhali is a familiar term among lovers of Malayalam literature. It is interesting to study the Jewish songs. We have many synagogue songs, wherein, each synagogue has got its own songs. There are several standing synagogues in the country. As within the area of Muziris project, we can find some of these songs still being maintained by individuals and communities. These are some of the reasons why we cherish these songs. Stretching to a wide range of songs, they sang freedom songs, drama songs and so on." In short, these songs are the soul of the Jewish community.

The Muziris Heritage area was where the Jews once settled for trade. The ongoing project has presently conserved two Jewish synagogues at Parur and Chendamangalam which is open to the public. In this context, the book holds importance for unravelling the rich tradition, culture and bygone history of the Jews.

The book was introduced by Prof.Scaria Zacharia, launched by Prof. David Shulman and received by Prof. C.Karmachandran, at a proud function on 30th August 2019 at the Muziris International Convention and Research Centre, Pullut. The function was held as part of the Economic History workshop organised by the Institute for Studies in the Heritage of Coastal Kerala (ISHCK)



23 / ആശുവോറെശിന്റെ പാട്ട്

1

ആതിരൊതലായ അറിഞ്ഞെ അറിവാളൻ
ആശുവോറെശു തന്റെ നാളിലെ കാലം
ആരാന്റെ നാട്ടിൽ പടക്കു പുറപ്പെട്ടു
ആറുറേ ഓരോനും മുർദ്ദോക്കായി സദ്ധീഹും
അർഥം എല്ലാം ഒക്ക വാരി അഴിച്ചോരോൻ
അർഥം ഇല്ലാത്തട്ടെന്ത് ആരോടെല്ലാം തേടി
ആരും കൊടുത്തില്ല ആറുറേ ഓരോനിക്കു
അറിവാളൻ മുർദ്ദോക്കായി സദ്ധീഹോടു തേടി

2

അടിമ എഴുതി തരികിൽ അർഥംതരാം
അടിമ എഴുതിക്കൊടുത്തു അർഥം വാങ്ങിതേ
അരിശം മനസ്സിൽ വച്ചു ഓറുറേ ഓരോനും
ആശുവോറെശു പക്കൽ ഓറുറേ ഓരോനും :
ഒരു ഗുലത്തെക്കെ ഒരു നാൾ വഴങ്ങേണം
പതിനായിരം ശിന്യാൻ വെള്ളി തരുവേനേ
അനുവാദം കൊടുത്താനോ ആശുവോറെശാ അപ്പള്ള

3

ഓല എഴുതിച്ചാൻ ഓറുറേ ഓരോനും
ഓരോരോ നാട്ടിൽ ഓലകൊടുത്തുതെ
ഒരു നാട്ടിലെ ഓല ഒരു നാട്ടിൽ ആയിതെ
പകർച്ച പിടിച്ചാനോ ഓറുറേ ഓരോനിക്കു
ഒർക്കത്തിൽ ആലോം കണ്ടു മുർദ്ദോക്കായി സദ്ധീഹും
നടങ്ങി എഴുന്നേറ്റു പകയിച്ചിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ
കമ്പിളിയും പുണ്ടു ചാമ്പലും പുണ്ടുതേ
ഭൂമിമേൽ വീണു കരഞ്ഞുകിടക്കുമ്പോൾ
ഏലിയാവു അന്നാടി വന്നു സൈനയിൽ എത്തിതെ
മുർദ്ദോഹായി എഴുന്നേറ്റു ശാലോം കൊടുത്തുതെ

4

അകാശത്തിലവിശേഷങ്ങൾ എന്തെന്ന
എന്തും പുറത്താണ് ചെമ്പെല ഇട്ടത്

ചെള്ള പൊറത്താണ് ചെമ്പെല ഇട്ടത്
വിളിപ്പിച്ചാൻ അപ്പള്ള എസ്തെ മലക്കൊന
വേതന ഓടെ വേതനപ്പെട്ടുവന്നു
എന്നാവിളിപ്പിച്ച കാലം എന്തെന്ന
മറ്റൊന്നും കൊണ്ടല്ല നിന്നെ വിളിച്ചിട്ടത്

5

നിന്റെ ഗുലത്തിന കൊല്ലുവാൻ കല്പിച്ചു
അതിനിപ്പ ഞാനിപ്പാൾ എന്തെന്നു ചെയ്യുന്നു
മുറുക നീ പൊകണം രാജാവു പക്കൽ
എന്റെ നാളല്ലാതെ എങ്ങിനെ ഞാൻ പോകും
അതൊന്നും കൂട്ടാക്ക ഇല്ല മുർദ്ദോക്കായി
വിരുത്തി പലർക്കും പെണ്ണുങ്ങൾ, പൈതങ്ങൾ
വീണുതുസ്കാരം നോയിവുറും മൂന്നുനാൾ
ചേർച്ചയിൽ വച്ചാൻ തലമുടി അപ്പോൾ

6

പൊന്നുമുടി വച്ചുപൊകുന്നു രാജദേവി
ഓടുത്തയിൽ നിന്നങ്ങൊലാകുന്ന നേരത്തു
ആശുവോറെശു തന്റെ കണ്ണിലെ കണ്ടുതെ
കൈയിലെ ചുരക്കോൽ കാട്ടിവിളിച്ചുതെ
അഴകിലിരുകിയ എസ്തേറെ വന്നോടി
നീന്നോടിതാരൊന്നു ചൊല്ലിട്ടു നീ വന്നു
എന്നോടിതാരൊന്നും ചൊല്ലിട്ടല്ല ഞാൻ വന്നു

7

ഓരോനും മക്കൾക്കും വിരുന്നുകൊടുക്കേണം
നിൻഷ്ടം എല്ലാമേ ചെയ്തുകോ എസ്തേറെ
പാരാതെ ചെന്നു വിരുന്നും ഒരുക്കിതെ
വിരുന്നും ഒരുക്കി വിളിപ്പിച്ചാൻ ഓരോന
ഓരോനും മക്കളും വന്നു വിരുന്നുണ്ടു
ഇന്നു ഓരോനും മക്കൾ എല്ലാവരും
നാളെയും എന്റെ വിരുന്നുകൽ പോരേണം



Exploring Cultural and Social Diversities in INDIA

Civilization is about human experience distilled through thousands of years of travel, trade, and cultural exchanges. The 2000-year history of Muziris, involve many travels, migrations, wars, as well as the fall and rise of empires and cultures. Widening the horizon of the Muziris' archaeological enquiries, the project reaches out to cultural interactions from far and near. In July, 2019, the project welcomed a group of distinguished scholars from the United States of America.

The scholars were part of the Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program in India 2019, themed on "Exploring Cultural and Social Diversities in India." The US Government funded Fulbright - Hays Seminars Abroad program included around 16 teachers and educationists from different parts of the US.

The participants visited sites of global significance in India, engaged in talks and discussions with policymakers, scholars, social workers and educational institutions, to gain first-hand knowledge on issues relevant to their country of visit. Muziris was part of their selected destinations across India. Others included Delhi, Pune, Kochi, Chennai, Kolkata, Varanasi, and Agra. The visit provided them with exquisite experiences of the cultural legacy of Muziris and present day Kerala.

The team spent two days at Muziris, July 13 and July 14, 2019. They visited the Pattanam excavation site and museum, Paravur Jewish Synagogue, Portuguese Fort at Kottappuram, Krishna Temple, Jewish Cemetery, Kottayil Kovilakam, Paliam Nalukettu, and Cherai. The Muziris

International Heritage boat cruise offered them a time-traveling experience through the spice route. Besides, a trip to the Mat Weaving Centre at Poyya, Kottappuram Market, and traditional fishing sites were provided to understand the cultural economy of Muziris then and now. The team also had the pleasure of enjoying traditional ritualistic performances of *Thiruvathira* and *Pulluvanpattu* during their stay at Muziris.

The team proposed to share the information about Muziris in their institutional curriculum. This will reinvigorate the economic and cultural resources in global heritage tourism experiences in the future. The international collaborations of Muziris are without doubt true to its spirit of being once the centre of dynamic cultural exchanges. The importance of Muziris is not limited to South Indian or South Asian history, rather, can re-draw and redefine the trajectories of global historical research.

Scholars who visited include Ms. April Anderson, Mr. Emmanuel Fairley, Ms. Stacey Fisher, Ms. Amber Glawe, Ms. Arlis Groves, Ms. Jane Hutcheson, Ms. Amie Kim, Ms. Chandra Lind, Ms. Kendra Miller, Ms. Elizabeth Odmak, Ms. Monica Rizzo, Ms. Estefania Sanchez, Ms. Anne Schaefer, Mr. Kenneth Wills, Ms. Danielle Woods, and Ms. Priscilla Zenn.

They were welcomed by Mr. P M Nowshad, Managing Director, Muziris Projects Ltd., Prof. Kesavan Veluthat, Dr. Midhun C Sekhar, Museum Manager and other staff of Muziris Projects Ltd.



Muziris Heritage Trail

‘Pedalling through The Spice Route’

The Muziris Projects Ltd witnessed a phenomenal Independence Day celebration on August 15, 2019.

The Muziris Projects Ltd., and Thrissur On a Cycle (TOC) joined hands for an exciting event. The celebration started off with Sri P M Nowshad, Managing Director, Muziris Projects Ltd, hoisting the national flag at the Muziris International Research and Convention Centre, Pullut, with the support of the staff and participants of the ‘Muziris Heritage Trail Cycling Event’.

Following that, the cycling event was officially flagged off by Kodungallur MLA Adv. V R Sunilkumar at the Kottapuram waterfront. The event then witnessed a prodigious amount of team spirit as the cyclists headed through the Muziris region, covering the rich landscape,

the various monuments and museums. “The visual experience of the remnants of a bygone civilization was just spectacular. This has become one of the signature events of Muziris to explore heritage sites, to get a taste of what it means to pedal through history,” one of the participants commented later.

The event became momentous as the riders extended their support to the people affected by the heavy rains. It was indeed a thoughtful gesture on behalf of the participants to express their love for our heritage and people.

“The heritage trail brings in the quintessential spirit of cultures and civilizations that made Muziris what it is”, Adv. Sunilkumar added in his inaugural speech.

Children's Activity Workshop



History is about tracing our past and interpreting human existence over time. And history cannot be more enjoyable than when presented as a tasteful anecdote through plays and games. The Muziris Projects recently introduced the 'Children's Activity Workshop' for school students, for them to learn and experience history through an amusing walk across the Muziris region. The programme is specifically designed for students from Government schools in various Panchayats under the Muziris Projects Ltd.

Workshop held on 28th July 2019, organized for various colleges and schools in the locality formally launched the programme. The workshop, presided over by Dr P.K.Thilak, Research Officer (Retd.) , SCERT, Trivandrum, explored the possibilities and potential of the activity as an innovative endeavour of experiential tourism among children. Mr. P M Nowshad, MD Muziris Projects Ltd welcomed the gathering. Renowned historian Prof. Kesavan Veluthat and conservation consultant Dr. Benny Kuriakose spoke extensively about the history and conservation ventures of the project and the scope of transforming the project into a participatory programme. Prof. Veluthat's lecture focussed on the uncharacteristic history of Muziris which needs to be passed on to the younger generation.

The workshop presented an in-depth action plan on how the programme will cater to the educational aspect of the conservation project. It also presented the importance of initiative and workable ideas to make the programme more student-friendly and learner-centric. Informal learning methods can materialise the idea of imparting knowledge about our history, culture and civilization.

The heritage walk would benefit students from classes 8 to 12 with a residential, guided two-day tour package that includes a boat cruise. The students will have an opportunity to "walk through" the legendary landmarks of the port town of Muziris. Thematically oriented museum visits will also provide interactive learning aids such as bilingual activity books, games, and so on.

The initiative would thus be a learner-centric learning strategy. The programme, in essence, facilitates cultural exchanges among different generations. From an educational point of view, the programme aims to implant a method of learning which will have a far-reaching resonance in the field of studies in history, culture and human sciences.



Weaving a Culture

Courtesy: Jacob B Jacob

All its history and natural landscape add color and beauty to heritage-based tourism in Chendamangalam, a hamlet near North Parur. The roads to Chendamangalam, dominated by shady trees and graceful bridges, remind the visitor of both past and present. It is a village that cares deeply about culture. And the most colourful ingredient of that is the Chendamangalam 'handloom' or 'kaithari'.

The flood of 2018 had devastated Chendamangalam weaving units, leaving all the stock severely damaged and soiled. The units have now become active, weaving their unique art.

The people of Chendamangalam weave fabrics, tell stories about weaving, and wear what they weave. It is rare to find a resident who cannot give us an account of the local weaving culture. And, when you start admiring the colors of the fabrics, you start loving people like Kuttan who works with Chendamangalam H.W.C.S No:47. This is one of the few units in Ernakulam district which is indispensable to the dyeing industry.

Ratnan, fondly called Kuttan is one among those people who create wonderful colours as part of their profession. At the dyeing unit, they transfer these colours to the yarn, and thus transform plain fabrics into garments of grandeur. Contemplating a colour theme for the cloth is thrilling work for them. Usually a reserved man, Kuttan makes his passion for this lovely art clear as he talks of his work.

"No matter how many colours you do, each time, each colour will always be memorable. Among the whole palette of colours we have done here, the 'vazhakoombu colour' remains my favourite. And we applied it on a lot of products too, on 'mundu', 'kallimundu', 'thorthu', even shirts'.

Chandran, the weaving master adds: " Every colour is impossibly gorgeous to me. But if you ask me, my favourites would be Olive R and Green X B N."

Of course, customers suggest or show us samples of shades they require. But there are many other colours that are not copied or traced." Chandran refers to the 'colour theory' he has learnt. "Many shades are our creation, we join colours from 'families' that can be connected in terms of beauty and appeal, and then it's a creation based on a rough calculation we make. It's the magic of trying variations of colour tones in

grams. Thus, there are enough shades of colours... more than a thousand. "

Premakumari, who has 30 years of experience in weaving, says: "We become excited, thrilled while the colours get intertwined. So, when we weave, we see the fabric in its richest hue. Among our colours, I still behold the 'maambazha colour', 'cherupayar pacha', 'kuppipacha', and 'chilli red' as my all time favourites. We admire, while weaving, those colours that compete for attention. And we never forget to appreciate Chandran and Kuttan for that."

Kuttan seems so admirable a professional when he says: "I am happy, especially to see elders clad in their handloom mundu, with our colours adorning the bright 'kara' in it. Many times, I have stopped on the roads looking at bed sheets spread out to dry, to murmur; 'Oh that's my colour, and there is a beauty in it.'

Premakumari adds: "From all my years here, among the most prized creations is a bed-sheet, that has not only withstood the challenges of time, but also the attention of whoever comes here. I still have one set with me to show them. All of us here had created the design and the colour theme for a competition in Trivandrum as part of a three-day training programme there, almost ten years back. We were asked to do all in one design and colour - items that would decorate a room - curtains, bed sheets, table spreads and floor mats. When you unfurl this bed sheet, there is an intricate display of a myriad of colours. I still look at the design and imagine how sedulously we had created it."

The stacks of handloom products displayed at the handloom units in Chendamangalam have a good selection of beautiful shades welcoming you. The colours are as admirable as the people who create them.

Alappuzha Heritage Project



Alappuzha, popularly known as the “Venice of the East” has always featured in the cultural landscape of the Indian peninsula because of its enchanting topography. Encircled by canals, backwaters and beaches, Alappuzha has an illustrious history of over 200 years. It is high time that we remember and document the glorious stories of the bygone era for posterity. “Alappuzha Heritage Project” is an ambitious venture undertaken by Muziris Projects Ltd to make this dream come true.

The project covers a vast area of Alappuzha with developmental plans ranging from conservation to maintenance of historical monuments and heritage sites. The project is a splendid tribute to the historical events and

people pertinent to the cultural and political history of Alappuzha. The Alappuzha conservation plan is a well researched mission which incorporates both the tangible and intangible heritage of the city, woven around memory, materials, and diverse written narratives.

The initial phase of the Alappuzha project plans museums on Mahatma Gandhi, labour movement, coir and yarn. A workshop on Mahatma Gandhi museum was held in Alapuzha on 11th August 2019. Mahatma Gandhi museum would be a magnificent gift of Kerala to the world as the world commemorates Gandhiji’s 150th birth anniversary this year. The workshop had a remarkable inaugural session with the presence of Sri G Sudhakaran, Hon’ble. Minister for Public Works and Reg., Dr T M Thomas Isaac, Hon’ble Minister for Finance and Coir, Sri A Annamalai, Director, National Gandhi Museum, New Delhi, renowned academician and Director, ISHCK, Prof. Kesavan Veluthat, Prof. Michael Tharakan, Chairman KCHR, Mr. P M Nowshad, Managing Director, Muziris Projects Ltd., Sri Rubin D’Cruz ,editor, National Book Trust, Delhi and Dr. Benny Kuriakose, the project consultant, among others. Project experts, invited guests and staff members associated with Muziris and Alappuzha Heritage Projects too were present.



Event of the month

A meeting was organized for the representatives of various Panchayats at the Muziris International Research and Convention Centre, Pullut on 30th July 2019. The meeting was organized to update the activities of the project to the Panchayats that are already a part of Muziris Projects Ltd and to welcome and include new Panchayats to the project. The meeting explained the current conservation projects and how it uses the state-of-the-art technologies to cater to different requirements of regional as well as international visitors.