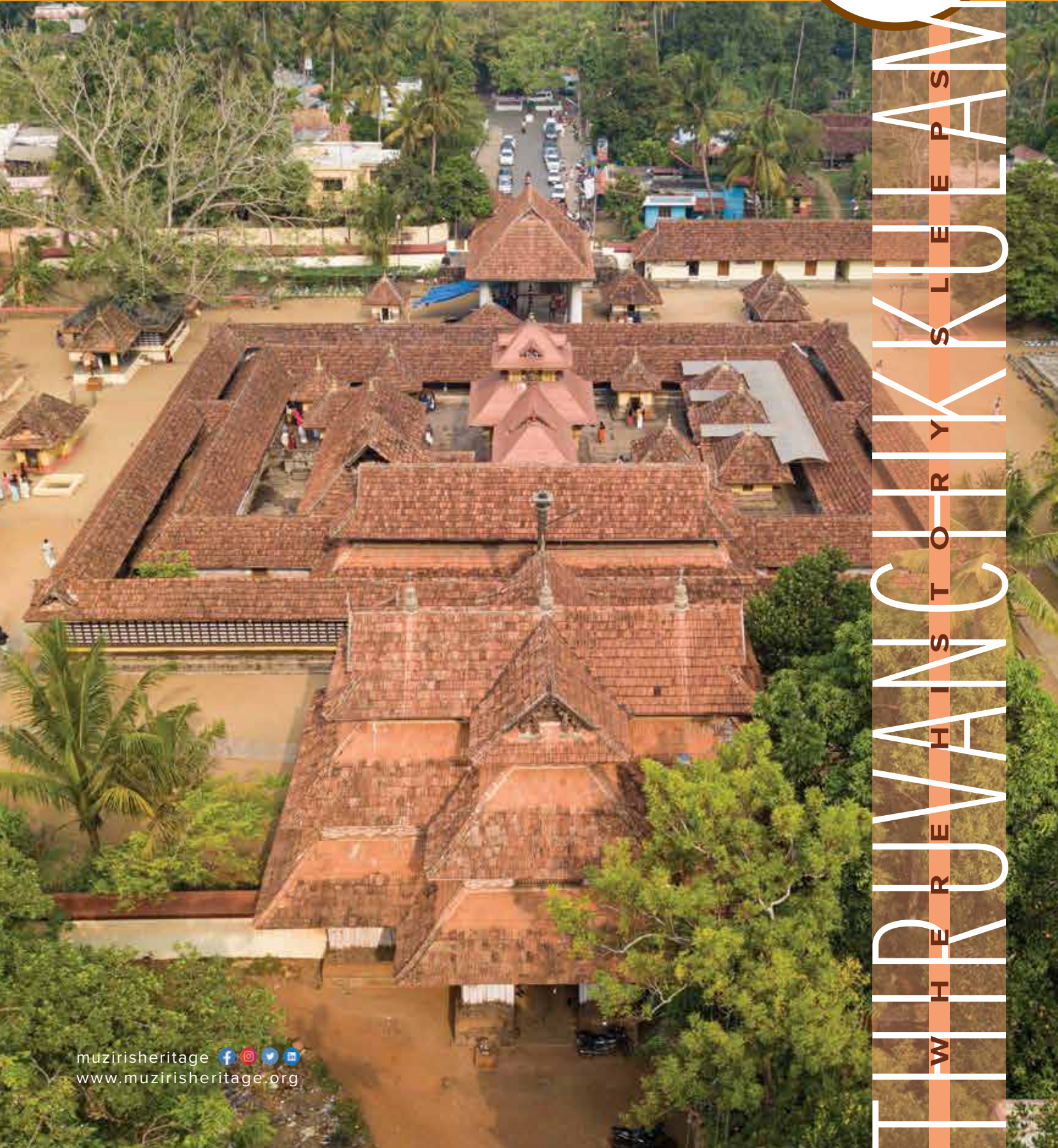


JULY 2020

MUZIRIS NEWS

Past Perfect, Present Continuous



THE PURVANCHAL HISTORICAL SLEEPERS



THIRUVANCHIKKULAM

WHERE HISTORY SLEEPS

Thiruvanchikkulam Sree Mahadeva Temple is one of the most famous Shiva temples of Kerala. Known as Anchaikkalam to the Tamil Bhakti hymns and hagiographical literature, it is one of the 274 Sivite Tirupatis (Holy sites) spread over the Indian subcontinent, the only one in Kerala, forming part of a pan-Sotuh Indian pilgrimage circuit. This Temple is believed in Kerala as among the 108 Shivalayas established by Sage Parasurama. There are 28 sub-deities here, many more than in any other temple in Kerala.

Sundaramurthy Nayanar and Cheraman Perumal Nayanar, two of the more important heroes of the Tamil Bhakti Movement, had a direct connection with Kerala. Sundaramurthy Nayanar was a close friend of Cheraman Perumal, and had the sobriquet, Tambiran Thozhan ("Friend of the Lord"). They lived in the ninth century CE. He has an exquisite hymn on the temple in his Tevaram on this temple. Periya Puranam, the Sivite hagiographical work, states that Cheraman Perumal was sitting in meditation in this temple when the ministers and other notables chose him to succeed to the Chera throne. The idols of Sundaramurthy Nayanar and

Cheraman Perumal are consecrated in the temple. It is believed that the two Nayanars ascended to Kailasa from this temple, the royal saint on a white horse and his friend on the back of an elephant sent down by Siva himself. This event is celebrated to this day as "Chothi Thiruvizha" on the Chothi day in the Malayalam month of Karkkitakam, in which a large number of Tamil-speaking pilgrims take part. The panchaloha idols of Sundaramurthy Nayanar and Cheraman Perumal are taken out in procession on the back of an elephant on this occasion. There is also a custom of reciting Thevarappathikangal along with the ritual.

Thiruvanchikkulam Temple has been renovated many times from the 11th or 12th century till modern times. There is an inscription on the base of the Namaskara Mandapam, about the renovation carried out in 1801. It states that this renovation was done after Tippu Sultan (referred to in the document as Shastrabahya or "the one who does not follow [our] scriptures") destroyed the temple.

14th-century literary works like Kokilasandesam by Uddanda Sastrikal and Lakshmidasa's Shukasandesam mention the temple.

After the period of the Perumals (early 12th century CE), this temple was under the control of the Perumpadappu Swaroopam and the Maharajas of Kochi. Then, from 1950 onwards, it has been under the control of the Cochin Dewaswom Board.

The “Couples Puja” of this temple is famous. The belief is that worshipping the divine bedchamber (Palliyara Thozhuka) is very efficacious in obtaining a blessed married life, and for the boon of getting the desired offspring. After the evening worship is over, Shiva and Parvati are brought ceremoniously to their bed-chamber. In the chamber, there are only a bed and pillows. Although this puja is performed every day, the puja on Mondays and full moon days are supposed to be more efficacious. Those Mondays on which a full moon occurs is the most meritorious!

This temple is two kilometres to the south of Kodungallur temple. It is situated to the north of “Cheraman Parampu” (Cheraman’s Compound) where the royal palace of Cheraman Perumal is believed to have existed. The temple is rich in bas-reliefs,



Malayalam Vattezuthu Inscription in Thiruvanchikkulam Temple

wooden sculptures, and stone idols. There is also a cassia fistula tree which blooms perennially, against the general nature of this type of trees blossoming only seasonally. It is believed that Sage Parasurama had sat at the base of this tree and meditated, and that the Shiva pratishtha here, one of the sub-deities, was installed by the sage. This sub-deity is known as Konnakal Shivan (Shiva of the Cassia tree).

The flag-hoisting, or kodi yettu for the annual festival at this temple, is done on the Shivaratri day in the month of Kumbha. This is also one of the rare temples where the aaraattu or ritual immersion of the idol during the festival, takes place at the seashore. Celebration of Tiruvatira asterism (Lord Shiva’s birth star) of the month of

Dhanu is also unique here.

The devotees who go to the Kodungallur Bhagavathy Temple for the Bharani Festival also visit Thiruvanchikkulam Temple to offer prayers. The custom is that the oracles and others who reach days before the main event in the Festival, the Aswathi Kaavutheendal, sing the Bharani songs at the temple and then proceed in a celebratory mood to Thiruvanchikkulam

Temple.

Much more than the beliefs and customs surrounding it, this temple is a historical monument that has deep connections to Kerala’s and south India’s ancient history. The task of preserving this heritage site has been taken over by the Muziris Heritage Project. As part of this, the construction of the Canal Office on the bank of the Canoly Canal in front of the temple has been in progress.

As the Thiruvanchikkulam Mahadeva Kshethram is a protected monument under the Archaeological Survey of India and the infrastructure development related to the temple was included in the Muziris Heritage Project and a walkway and toilet block were constructed in 2013-14.





P. KESAVADEV FOR HIM

REVOLUTION

COMPRISED LIFE & LITERATURE

P. Kesava Dev, along with Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai and Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, played a unique role in transforming the character of Malayalam literature, enabling it to tell the stories of the ordinary people. They addressed ordinary men and women, and made it possible for them to read and understand what was written about them, in the most straightforward language possible.

Dev, who considered life as a struggle, was a true revolutionary in social activism and literature. He had recognised 'Resistance' to be his single slogan. He opposed social

Keshava Dev's social life began, as he came under the influence of the ideals of Pandit Khushi Ram. He became a rationalist later. He had lost faith in gods who could not do away with the hunger of the poor. Shifting from his rationalist activities, he immersed himself in trade unionism. He used his novels, short stories and plays, as sites of struggle against social evils.

At the time of joining the Arya Samaj, Acharya Pandit Rishi Ram had asked him to remove that part of his name which indicated his caste. Keshava Dev, whose real name till then was 'Keshava Pillai' was ready to do that too. Pandit

Rishi Ram's suggestion was that he could replace 'Pillai' either with 'Das' or with 'Dev.' He chose 'Dev' instead of 'Das', declaring openly on that occasion, that "I am not anyone's dasa (servant)."

All of Dev's literary works portray social realities and exhortation for

social change. Dev's works are noted for their intense idealism, the presentation of the writer's personal viewpoint directly and vehemently, emotional intensity that often slipped into sentimentality or verbosity, and a poetic and incisive language. Although he arrived on the literary scene as a short story writer, he is remembered as a novelist. Resistance was his natural reaction. That may be the reason why he named his autobiography Ethirppu, ("Opposition").

His published works include the novel Ayalkkaar(Neighbours) that won the Sahitya Akademi Award (1964) and other books like Odayil Ninnu,(Out of the

Drain), Naini,(The Actress) Bhrantalayam(Madhouse), Ulakka(The Pestle), Swapnam,(Dream) Kannadi,(The Mirror) Adhikaram,(Power) Oru Sundariyute Atmakatha (Autobiography of a Beautiful Woman), Rowdy and others. His plays include, Njaanippakkammunistaakum,(I'll become a Communist Just Now!), Munnottu,(Forward!) Oru Muri Thenga,(The Half of a Coconut) a few short story collections, and the autobiographical works Ethirppu(Resistance) and Thirinjunttam(Looking Back). He also has a collection of prose-poems, and a treatise on the novel to his credit.

His novel, Odayil Ninnu (From the Drain), has been discussed keenly following controversies at the time of it becoming a prescribed text book. A movie was also made based on it.

Dev was the President of the Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society, Chairman of Kerala Sahitya Academy, Executive Member of the Sahitya Parishat. He is also the winner of Soviet Land Nehru Award.

Keshava Dev was born in Nalledath family, Kedamangalam, North Paravur, on August 20, 1904. His 37th death anniversary fell on 1 July 2020. Till 1983 when he shifted to Thiruvananthapuram during the final phase of his life, Dev was a permanent resident of North Paravur. The house he was born at Kedamangalam is in a dilapidated condition now. Muziris Heritage Project has decided to take over this house,, renovate it and convert it into P. Keshava Dev Memorial. Sri P.M.Noushad, Managing Director, Muziris Project Limited, announced that the renovation work will commence in the coming financial year.

injustice and conservatism. Dev was one of the earliest Communists of Kerala. He had played an essential part in drawing up the constitution of the Socialist Party in 1934. But, he developed ideological differences with the Party later on. Gradually he withdrew from the Communist movement. Dev, who became one of the front-running leaders of the Progressive Writers' Movement, raised his voice in protest over the control of the Communist Party over literature in later years.

It was through the Arya Samaj that





RELICS OF JEWISH CULTURAL TRADITIONS

It is believed that during 971-931 BCE that King Solomon's ships berthed at Muziris port, at the end of their voyages in the quest of spices. Jews are said to have begun their relationship with Kerala from those times, the famous Jewish Copper Plates (1000 CE) being a solid piece of its evidence. Jews who arrived as maritime traders in the 16th century founded a Jewish settlement near the present-day North Paravur market and conducted their business from there. The synagogue that stands in the Jews Street in Paravur was established by them in 1615 CE. This is the biggest and the oldest synagogue found in Kerala.

No worship is being conducted at this synagogue now. Though this synagogue was declared as a protected monument in 1996, it was lying neglected until it was taken over by the State Archaeology Department in 2009. From 2010, this synagogue is being preserved by the Muziris Heritage Project. From 2014, it has been renovated and declared as Kerala Jewish History Museum and thrown open to the public and for researchers. Paravur Museum is a blend of traditional Jewish architecture related to synagogues, and of Kerala architectural style. From available historical records one can deduce that the current synagogue building was constructed upon the remains of an older synagogue.

When the adherers of the Jewish faith began returning to their Promised Land, Israel, from all over the world, the Jews of Paravur also forsook this land. The last worship was conducted in this synagogue in 1988. After that, the holy scriptures and other venerable objects from this

synagogue were taken to Israel.

One can enter the synagogue from the Jews' Street, passing through the gatehouse. The specialty of the structure of synagogues in Kerala is the special seating arrangement for women. There is a separate flight of stairs from the outside, for the women to enter. In all these, Kerala architectural style is manifest. The chamber next to the main door of the synagogue is called 'Asara.' Those who enter the synagogue will have to remove their footwear and keep them in the 'Asara' first. The removal of

monument.

At one time there were more than 3000 Jews in Kerala, going by available statistics. According to the census report of 1901, there were 1288 Jews in Kerala, spread out over eight synagogues.

It was after the 1950s that most of the Kerala Jews migrated to Israel. Wherever they had established settlements in Kerala, they had also built synagogues. There were twelve such synagogues all over Kerala. Of



*He who dwelt in Rock and Bush
May He dwell for His sake in my house
May there be light in it for the House of Jacob
Alas, darkened in my exile
Said David Jacob's Son
Renowned noble seed of Castile
At the competition of the holy sanctuary
May it be His will that the Redeemer come*

the footwear maybe a Keralite practise that they borrowed.

Among the Jews that arrived in Kerala, there were 'white' Jews as well as 'black' Jews, and they practised a kind of segregation based on skin colour. The synagogue at Paravur was of the 'white' Jews. The 'black' Jews had their synagogue at the adjoining Chendamangalam. This synagogue too, is being preserved as an ancient

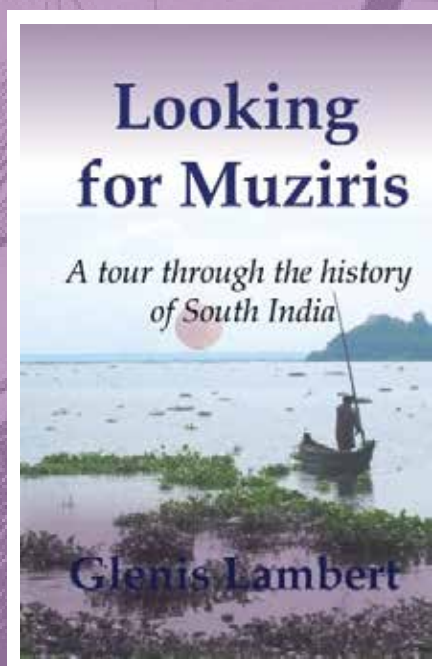
these, seven survive now, in Paravur, Chendamangalam, Mala, Ernakulam and Mattancherry. The Paradesi Synagogue at Mattancherry and the Kadavumbhagom Synagogue at Ernakulam are preserved by private individuals. The rest are protected by the government. The synagogues at Paravur and Chandamangalam are important stop-overs in the Muziris Heritage Sight-seeing Tour.

Book Review:



GLENIS ANN LAMBERT

THE WAY TO MUZIRIS



- Author: Glenis Ann Lambert
- Published: 22 July 2014
- Publisher: Createspace Independent
- Genre: Travel literature

For Glenis Ann Lambert, her book *Looking for Muziris: A Tour Through the History of South India*, is a journey in search of Muziris. It was at a stage in life when ordinary people enjoy their retirement life that Lambert, Glenis her life-partner James set out on a journey through south India. It was James's journey, in fact. A journey to become a travel agent in southern India, warding off the temptation to sleep till noon and to lounge in the sun in the front-yard lawn. Leaving behind any notion of retirement and rest without a second thought, Glenis joined forces with him, with a lot of anxieties and expectations flooding her mind.

Glenis testifies that even after completing five years of frantic exploration of south India, they could not even reach anywhere near learning India or its history.

What Glenis has accomplished in her book is not an ordinary travelogue or narrated history. There are several interesting descriptions of her first-hand experiences. She has narrated in it experiences ranging from her quests in search of clean toilets, to journeys in search of south India. Glenis's journey also passes through places that foreign tourists coming to south India frequent. Vistas from the tranquil expanses of the backwaters in the south, to the dense forests of the Western Ghats are spread out as the author's experiences in the book's pages.

Over and above the glimpses on the surface, Glenis has made in-depth research into the history of each land she explores. She goes over historical records about the maritime traders who arrived on the shores of Kerala, and about the colonial occupying forces. She also narrates the local stories that turn topsy-turvy the western logic of the pirate and proselytisers.

No historical record can bypass Muziris, when it narrates the story of the adventurous explorers who handled invaluable gems and priceless spices. Even the history of elephants, a time before horses had sighted Kerala, has been recorded in it. What Glenis is doing, is inhabiting an imaginary called India rich in terrifying, complexities, and oftentimes apparently contradictory notions, into a mythical centre, which is called Muziris. She is not able to conclusively state whether she has been successful in discovering this ancient city. She can only know one thing—that she is still on the quest towards it.



Kodungallur Cheraman Juma Masjid



Kottayil Kovilakam Holy Cross Church



Kodungallur Temple Museum



Gothuruth Chavittunatakam Museum

PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

Different programmes of preservation, construction, and renovation under the Muziris Heritage Project are in progress in different localities in the project area. The latest among these, is the development of basic infrastructure facilities at the Thrippykkulam Mahadeva Temple. Seating arrangements for visitors, walkways, toilet blocks, solar-powered streetlamps, gateways, cycle-parking sheds, arrangements for disposing of waste, etc., are included in this project.

The state government had already sanctioned Rs.3.29 crores for the development of necessary facilities and amenities at different places of worship. Included in this scheme, the first phase of the development works at the Thrippykkulam Mahadeva Temple have been initiated. The other places of worship already included in the list for such developments are Kodungallur Sri Kurumba Bhagavathy Temple, Thiruvanchikkulam Mahadeva Temple, Shiva Temple at Keezhththali, Cheraman Juma Masjid, Mar Thoma Church at Azheekode, Kottakkavu Church and Sreenarayanapuram Nelpini Temple.

Of this, the construction of the subterranean prayer hall as a part of the preservation efforts at Cheraman Juma Masjid is under way. At Thiruvanchikkulam, works for the protection of the Canal Office were being carried out. Work will resume here from 1 August 2020.

Under the Muziris Heritage Project, the maintenance works of the Holy Cross Church are also being carried out. Work on the façade, the roof, the flooring etc are in progress. As part of the preservation works at St. Sebastian's Parsonage, plastering works, joinery fixing etc., are under development. It is intended to convert this heritage block into a museum for Chavittunatakam.

Another memorial, works on which are in progress, is P.A. Syed Myhammad Cultural Centre. The slab shuttering of the floor of the first floor here is being carried out now.



Beautification Works of the Muziris bus stand road

Muziris Heritage project has started the second phase of beautification works of the Muziris bus stand road, Kodungallur. As part of it, the inauguration of planting saplings was done by Sri V R Sunilkumar MLA. Municipal Chairman K R Jaithran, PM Nowshad, MD, Muziris Heritage Project, councillors Rekha Salprakasan and Parvathy Sukumaran participated.



Vegetable Harvesting

Vegetables were at the peak of quality, tenderness and flavor at the Muziris Heritage Project vegetable garden. Fresh produce of ladies finger, bitter melon, brinjal, snake gourd, ash gourd, pumpkins and varieties of beans were harvested on 30th June 2020. The harvest was inaugurated by Sri V R Sunilkumar MLA. PM Nowshad, MD, Muziris Heritage Project presided. ISCHK Director Dr Kesavan Veluthat, Sreeba Sunilkumar, the staff of Muziris Project participated. As part of the 'Subhiksha Keralam' venture, the organic farming program was launched on a one-acre area near the office in Pullut, during the lockdown days.



Review Meeting

To discuss the entire projects under Kodungallore and Kaipamangalam zones of Muziris Heritage Project, a review meeting was held on 2nd July at the Muziris international Research and Convention centre, Pullut, in the presence of Sri V R Sunilkumar MLA and Sri Taison Master MLA.



Nelpini Temple Visit

Nelpini / Neypini temple is located at Sree Narayanapuram, around 3 km away from Kodungallur. Mr.P.M. Naushad, M.D. Muziris Heritage Project Mr.M.K. Joseph (Coordinator , Muziris Heritage Project, Dr.Midhun (Museum Manager) , Prof. Kesavan Veluthat , Director, Institute of studies in the Heritage of Coastal Kerala, visited Nalpini temple on 6 th July 2020. Muziris Heritage Project is taking efforts to conserve the stone inscription in the temple.



Visit to SN Puram Sri Krishna Temple

Mr E.T. Tyson Master MLA, Mathilakam Block Panchayat President Shri KK Abidali, Muziris Heritage Project MD Shri PM Nowshad, ISHCK Director Keshavan Veluthat, Shri MK Joseph and Shri Ramesh Babu Kaypamangalam visited SN Puram Sri Krishna Temple. The temple authorities requested that the temple be included in the Muziris heritage project. The Muziris team offered all possible support for the infrastructure development for the renovation work of the Krishna Temple.



Fight Against Covid

Muziris Convention Center was declared as a Covid-19 First-Line Treatment Center (CFLTC) by Thrissur District Collector Shri. Shanavas IAS. The Muziris Convention Center will serve as a primary health center for the treatment and observation of asymptomatic patients, and patients with only mild symptoms. It can accommodate up to 250 patients.



Renovation of Cheraman Juma Masjid

The next phase of the renovation of Cheraman Juma Masjid is in progress. Muziris Heritage Project, MD Shri P.M. Nowshad and representatives from the community symbolically participated in the ongoing work.



The Muziris Heritage Project is widening

The Muziris Heritage Project is has included thirty-eight more places of worship in the area along the Muziris Passage. Four boat jetties will be built to be part of the Muziris Heritage Tour. Boards inscribing the history and heritage of places of worship, gardens, and direction boards up to a distance of one kilometer will also be set up. Discussions have been completed with the authorities of various places of worship regarding the implementation of the project. The development activities envisioned by the authorities of the respective areas of worship will be undertaken and implemented under the Muziris project with a centralized nature.

Covid - 19 Protection

COVID -19 Protection Masks were distributed to the employees of the Muziris Heritage Project

Conservation of P Kesavadev's house

Muziris Heritage Project will conserve Kesavadev's residence at Paravur, which is in a damaged state now.