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MUZIRIS NEWS

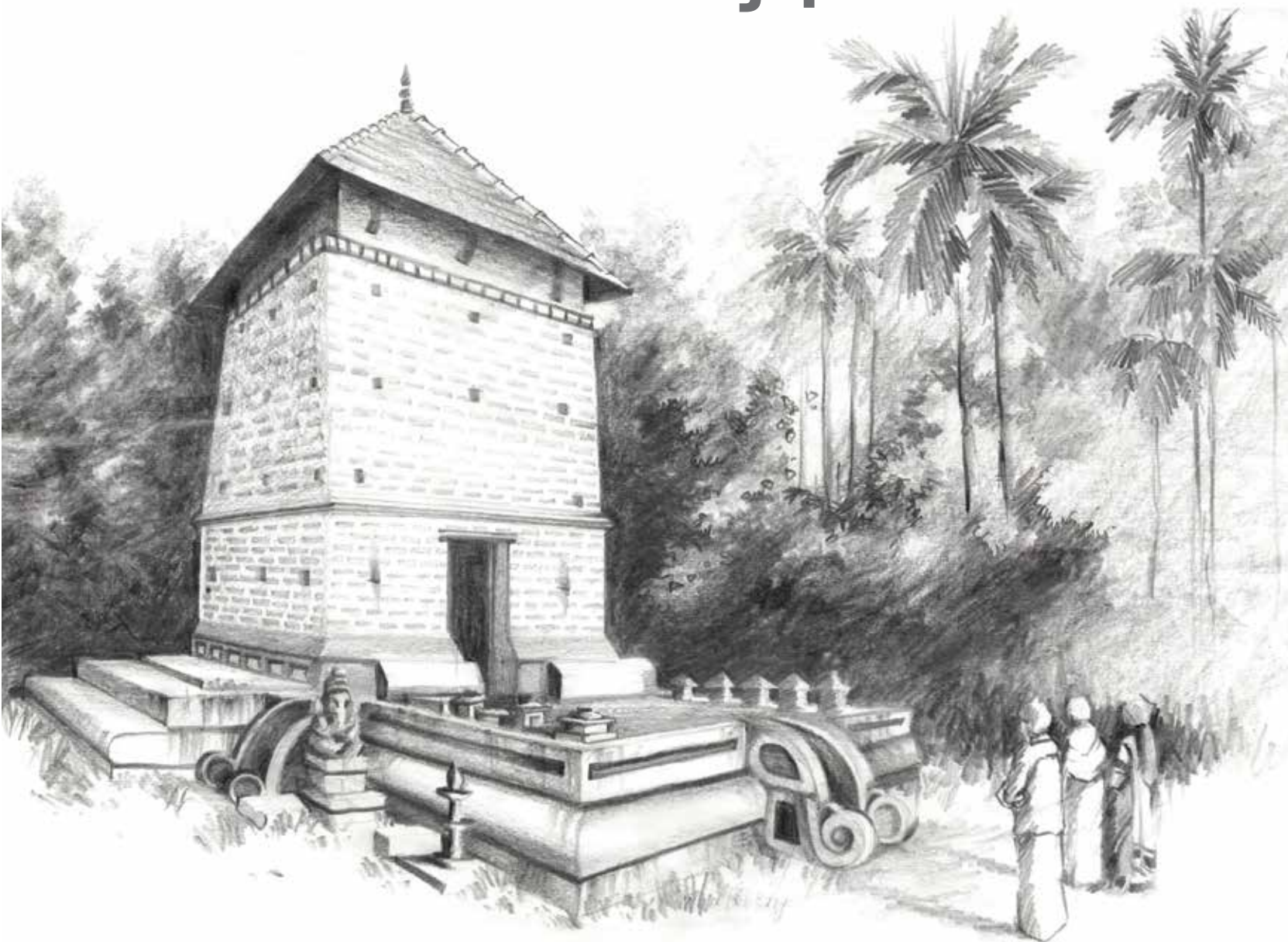
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THALA

Temples at Mahodayapuram





2022 Muziris Waves

Muziris Waves 2022 marked the beginning of the annual celebrations of the Muziris Heritage Project. As part of the celebrations, Minister for Tourism Adv. P.A. Mohammed Riyas inaugurated various programs related with tourism and non-formal education on 7th January 2022 at the Muziris Amphitheater, Kottapuram. Adv. V R Sunilkumar MLA presided over the function. The heritage project officially launched the solar-powered boat of CIAL and a Twenty four seated boat built by the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation. The ceremony also saw the awarding of prizes to the students who won 'ente paithrukam', the state-level pencil drawing competition organized in connection with the World Heritage Day celebration. Mr. S. Suhas IAS, Managing Director, CIAL welcomed the gathering.

Muziris Project Ltd Managing Director P.M. Nowshad detailed the project. Smt. M.U. Shinija Teacher (Chairperson, Kodungallur Municipality), K.R. Jaithan (Vice Chairman, Kodungallur Municipality), Elsy Paul (Chairperson, Health Standing Committee), K.S. Kaisab (Chairperson, Human Welfare Standing Committee), Latha Unnikrishnan (Chairperson, Development Standing Committee), Sheela Panikassery (Education Standing Committee Chairperson) O. N Jayadevan (Chairman, Public Works Standing Committee) Adv. Venkateshwaran DT (Councilor, Kodungallur Municipality) V. M. Johny (Councilor Kodungallur Municipality) & Francis Bacon (Councilor Kodungallur Municipality) were present at the function. Ibrahim Zabin (Marketing Manager, Muziris Heritage Project) gave the vote of thanks.



HERMAPOLLON BOAT

SOLAR BOAT

In the wake of revival in tourism sector after the Covid, the CIAL handed over a solar-powered boat to operate jointly with the Muziris heritage project. The 24-seater boat, which runs on 15 solar panels, can travel for up to five hours on a single charge. Passengers can use boats with AC and Non AC facilities. Muziris has taken over the solar boat to cater the increase in tourists visiting Muziris.

The decline in Covid-19 cases in Kerala revived the domestic tourism industry. A considerable increase in the footfall of domestic tourists was being marked in the Muziris project zone after the lockdown. During the tourist seasons, many tourists could not book the boating tickets due to nonavailability of the seats. and then they had to visit heritage sites and museums by road. Boating was on with only six hop on hop off boats and five water taxis. When, the Muziris Heritage Project management requested the government to increase the number of boats carrying visitors to the museums. The government had sanctioned ₹3.06 crore for the project through the Department of Tourism to purchase three more boats, including a rescue boat. The first completed 24 seat boat built by the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC) with a state-of-the-art technology named MHP Hermapollon, the first completed boat was taken over by the Minister for Tourism Adv. P.A. Mohammed Riyas.



PENCIL DRAWING COMPETITION

The Muziris Heritage Project, in collaboration with the Department of education, organized the 'My Heritage' pencil drawing competition on World Heritage Day (April 18) to bring the tangible and intangible heritage of Kerala to the public. Suryadath S, a 10th class student of Kollam City Central School, got first in the competition. Jagannath KM, 8th class student, Kadampur Higher Secondary School, Kannur, came second, and Abhinav C, 10th class student, GHSS Nemmara School, Palakkad, came third.

The first position student was awarded a cash prize of Rs.15000, the second Rs.10000, the third winner Rs.5000 trophies and certificates were also distributed. Hon'ble Minister for Tourism Adv. P.A. Mohammad Rias presented prizes to the winners. Moreover, the project had arranged a one-day heritage boat trip with a stay for the families of the winners to visit the tourist heritage sites of the Muziris Heritage Project.



THALI

Temples at Mahodayapuram

There were 4 Shiva temples in Mahodayapuram, such as Keezhthali, Melthali, Nediyaithali, and Chingapuram Thali, and these represent Airanikkulam, Moozhikkulam, Paravur, and Iringalakkuda gramam or brahmin settlement, respectively.

MGS Narayanan

A new epoch in the history of Kerala began in the ninth century A.D. with the establishment of the second Chera kingdom. This period indicates a departure from the early historical system of clan-based societies. Makotai, or Mahodayapuram, the seat of the Cheraman Perumal, is identified with present-day Kodungallur in central Kerala. The medieval Cheras claimed that they were descended from the Cheras who flourished in pre-Pallava (early historic) south India. However the exact relationship between the two branches of the Chera family is not known to scholars. They had founded their capital near the ancient city of Vanchi, close to the old port town of Muziris. It was called Makotai or Mahodayapuram in Sanskrit works, Muziri by travelers, and Muyirikode in inscriptions. The Perumal revived the glory of the early Cheras of Makotai

and settled down at Tiruvanchikulam; the region became a great metropolis. Hence, they are known as the later Cheras.

The Chera kingdom derived most of its wealth from maritime trade relations (the spice trade) with the Middle East. Scholars have ample data on several chieftaincies by analyzing the medieval Kerala inscriptions relating to the Chera period. According to them, Cheras followed the Dravidian culture, and agriculture flourished greatly during their rule, and the surplus commodities and wealth had centered only in the Namboothiri Gramams. During the Chera dynasty, who were Shaivites, the kings had many advisors, usually Namboothiri's. Though they are few, the Namboothiris have wielded great power and influence throughout the history of Cheras. According to MGS Narayanan, the Namboothiri advisors known as Thaliyathiris customarily gathered at a Shiva temple called Thali. Political units known as "nadus" controlled by powerful hereditary chiefs or households had occupied central importance in the structuring of the Chera state. The administrative structures have been carried out in Thali temples and represent different political units. There were 4 Shiva temples in Mahodayapuram, such as Keezhthali, Melthali, Nediyaithali, and Chingapuram Thali, and these represent Airanikkulam, Moozhikkulam, Paravur, and Iringalakkuda gramam or brahmin settlement, respectively. These thali temples are mentioned in the Perunna inscription of 1101 AD, the Kollam Rameshwaram temple inscription of 1102 AD, and the 11th-century Thrikkulasekharapuram inscription. Thali is derived from the Sanskrit word 'sthalī'. The term denotes the center, which is associated with temple administration. However, Kodungallur still has two of the four thali temples mentioned in the Keralopathy, which can be deduced from the ancient records.



Mandapam built as part of the Muziris project



Keezhthali temple is well known with its same name and Chingapuram Thali as Sringapuram. Both these temples are dedicated to Lord Shiva.

The architecture of the thali temples was the Dravidian style. The temples have unique architectural features like 'samachathura vimana' and mukhamandapa, used laterite to build. This temple is unique from the early temples of the Chera kingdom. Unlike other temples in Kerala, the Keezhthali Shiva Temple has a large sreekovil or garbhagriha, now in ruins. The temple facing the east is built of laterite blocks. Initially, the Keezhthali Siva temple must have been a large complex occupying a wide area. It is also a sandhara-temple. Unfortunately, its outer walls (bahya-bhitti) have fallen, but the inner walls stand in the middle like a cubical tower. It is believed to have been destroyed in various attacks. On plan, it comprises a square garbha-griha with a narrower mukha-mandapa. The mukhamandapa has three flights of steps on the three sides. In that case, the Keezhthali Siva temple was intended to be a dvitara-vimāna with a square griva and pyramidal sikhara. In all probability, the temple was not fronted by a namaskara-mandapa. To the right of the sopana, in front of the mukha-mandapa, there are the figures of a large seated Ganapati of dark grey granite and three images of broken sapthamathrikas. There are five Sapta-matrika images in the Trichur Museum, possibly discovered from the Keezhthali temple and belonging to the ninth century

AD. Architecturally also, the temple with its classical sandhāra arrangement, which became virtually out of date in the Middle phase (11th to 14th Century) - may be dated to the same period. The temple was taken over by the Kerala State Archaeological Department and protected as a historical monument. A mandapa over the balikkal, is being restored in traditional style under the aegis of the Muziris Heritage Project. The Sringapuram Temple is located little north of this temple, near the Kodungallur Kovililakam. The Sringapuram Temple has not undergone much change. Outside the sanctum sanctorum, there are four sub-shrines dedicated to Lord Shiva.

Historians have been trying to trace the location of the melthali, one of the Thali temples, through various means. Keezh means east, and mel means west. So the methali should be on the west side. To the west of the keezhthali there is a place called Methala. There are no ancient temples in the Methala area. Thrikkulasekharapuram is a Krishna temple located to the southwest of the keezhthali. Inside the temple, there is a sub-shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva. According to Kanippayoor Sankaran Namboodiripad, the temple was located at Methalapadam in Methala and was shifted to Thrikkulasekharapuram for unknown reasons. Near Methali, there is a field called Thaliyazhchappadam, still reminiscent of those old days. According to MGS Narayanan, Methali will be a sub-shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva situated in the Thrikkulasekharapuram temple complex. This temple is

famous for the association with Kulasekhara Alvar, one of the twelve renowned Vaishnava saints, who seems to have raised this fine edifice. It is one of the few temples with many original features still untampered. Though it is called Krishna temple, the main idol in the sanctum sanctorum is that of a standing four-armed Vishnu. Axially, the temple consists of a square garbhagriha facing the east and a narrower pillared mukha-mandapa- its antarala or Ardha-mandapa being undefined. A close examination of the interior plan appears to have two circumambulatory paths, one of them blocked permanently. It is evident from the preceding description that the temple complex retains some of its older sculptural and architectural features, which are mainly akin to the Pallava tradition of the Tamil country. The beginning of the temple may be dated to the first quarter of the ninth century. However, a few Vatteluttu inscriptions records copied from the temple do not go beyond the eleventh century. The inscription found to the east of the Garuda shrine is ascribable to the eleventh century on palaeographical considerations that may help decide the date of foundation of the temple. It mentions that the gift of gold was made in the '195th year after the construction of the temple'. The temple's foundation may be placed in the ninth century based on a rough calculation. It conforms well with the

tradition that the temple was built by Kulasekhara Alvar, who has been given a date of A.D. 800-820. Another inscribed slab containing an early vattezhuttu inscription is found fixed on the prakara floor near the Mukhamandapa may be dated to the 12th century, and it states that nalu thali met unanimously on a particular day.

There is a temple called Nediyaithali on the north side of Kodungallur Kavu. The Nediyaithali temples have a Shiva lingam as big as the keezhthali Siva temple., Rama Varma Kulasekaran, the last Perumal, in Vrishchikam, Kollavarsham 277 says 'naluthaliyeyum thrikkuntrapuzhayeyum koottikundu nediyaithaliyilirundaruli' However, MGS observes that Nediyaithali, as the name suggests, must have been the oldest and largest Thiruvanchikulam Shiva temple of that period. According to Ilamkulam, another temple called Arathali or Arayar Thali in Kodungallur was famous during the reign of Cheraman Perumal. On the west side of the Thiruvanchikulam temple there is a small shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva called Thevar. Kanippayoor considers that temple to be Arathali. Four tali, including the Nediyaithali, existed near the capital of the Cheras who ruled Mahodayapuram, and it spread light to the prosperity that Kodungallur had in the 9th to 12th centuries.





Heritage WALK

STUDENTS CULTURAL HERITAGE FESTIVAL



'Student Heritage Walk' is a study tour introducing the Muziris Heritage Project to provide students with a visual experience of Kerala's history. The concept of 'Student Heritage Walk' is being introduced in Kerala for the first time to make students aware of the ancient port city of Muziris. `5 crores has been allotted in the last budget. 'Heritage Walk' is being organized for two days. These days, eminent scholars organize classes for students. In addition, students will have an opportunity to

experience first-hand information on the region's intangible cultural heritage, such as pottery making, weaving traditions, folk art forms, and various fishing methods prevailed in Muziris. Students are being provided with basic facilities such as accommodation, food, transportation, and support of information officers. Learning kits, including activity books on various museums, eco friendly caps, bags, and writing pens filled with seeds, are also distributed to the children participating in the heritage walk. The boat ride starts from Kottapuram and reaches the Paliyam Kovilakam and Paliyam Nalukettu museums at Chendamangalam. Students will be able to interact directly with the artefacts on display at the museum. On the same day they visit the Kottapuram Fort. In the evening, folk art forms are

performed in front of the students. The Munambam boat yard will be the first destination on the second day. After visiting the second destination at Paravur Jewish Synagogue, the students will get the opportunity to see traditional fishing methods using Chinese nets and other fishing traps. The journey ends at the Kottapuram waterfront. Kerala will set an example in India in

implementing non formal education by simply presenting the arduous task of reading and memorizing historical facts from text books. The Government of Kerala has sanctioned 50 lakh for the Heritage Walk for the first phase of the non-formal education program at the state level, till March 31, 2022.



Cheraman Juma Masjid: Special postal stamp and cover released

A special postal stamp and envelope with the image and short history of CheramanJuma Masjid were released on January 28. Kochi Center Regional Postmaster General Mariamma Thomas presented the first cover to Adv. V R Sunilkumar M L A at a function held in the courtyard of Cheraman Juma Masjid. Municipal Corporation Vice Chairman K R Jaitran, Cheraman Mahal committee President Dr. P. A Muhammad Sayeed, Muziris Heritage Project Managing Director P. M Nowshad, Mahal Committee Secretary S A Abdul Khayyum, Masjid Imam Dr. Muhammad Salim Nadwi, Post Inspector U. S Rajani, Muziris Project Marketing Manager Ibrahim Zabin, EB Faisal, and Marketing Executive Post S Sajeev were present.



ALAPPUZHA HERITAGE PROJECT ALAPPUZHA

Canal beautification

The beautification work of the Alappuzha Canal has started as part of the heritage project. Preliminary work is underway to construct cycle tracks, street lights, landscaping, and a grill to prevent sewage from entering into the canal. The work is being carried out from Kothuval Chavadi to Muppalam.

Review meeting

The activities of the Alappuzha Heritage Project so far have been evaluated in the review meeting held on February 14, 2022, in the presence of elected representatives and various government departments. Alappuzha M. L. A P. P. Chittaranjan presided over the function. Ambalapuzha M L A H. Salam and Alappuzha Municipal Chairperson Soumya Raj were present. Discussions were held with Department of Tourism, Ports, INKEL, and the Coir Corporation. Muziris Projects Managing Director Nowshad P. M. presented the activities of the Alappuzha Heritage Project so far.



Maiden Voyage through THE CONOLLY CANAL

The project aims to promote village tourism and inland water transport and attract more tourists to the Muziris Heritage Project area by developing different tourism packages. In the first phase, water tourism will be extended to Mathilakam Bungalow, which will be completed by connecting historical sites like Karuppadana, Poovathumkadavu and Ilavanchikulam. MLA Adv. V.R. Sunilkumar and MLA E.T. Tyson Master led the voyage and the trip started from Kottapuram and moved through canolly canal covering SreeNarayanapuram, Mathilakam, Perinjanam and Edathuruthy on 04th February. Muziris Heritage Project Managing Director P M Nowshad, Mathilakam Panchayat President Zeenat Basheer, Panchayat Member O.A. Gentrin, Marketing Manager Ibrahim Zabin Finance Manager Sony Roy and Museum manager Sajna Vasanthraj were present.



MATERIAL CULTURE IN MUZIRIS

Museum : PaliamKovilakam
Name of Object : Alilavilakku
Material : Brass
Size : Height 50 cm,
Weight : 18 kg

Artefact Description:

The Alilavilakku is integral to several rituals and ceremonies in Hindu temples in Kerala. The lamp is made of brass and is very much related to traditional beliefs and activities. The shape of the lamp is similar to that of a banyan tree. It has a square base and a 5cm long old Malayalam inscription can be seen on its base. Usually, cotton wicks doused in oil or ghee are used in the leaf-shaped petals for lighting. Since it was one of the objects used in the rituals performed in Paliam temples, it is displayed temple gallery of the Paliam palace museum.

