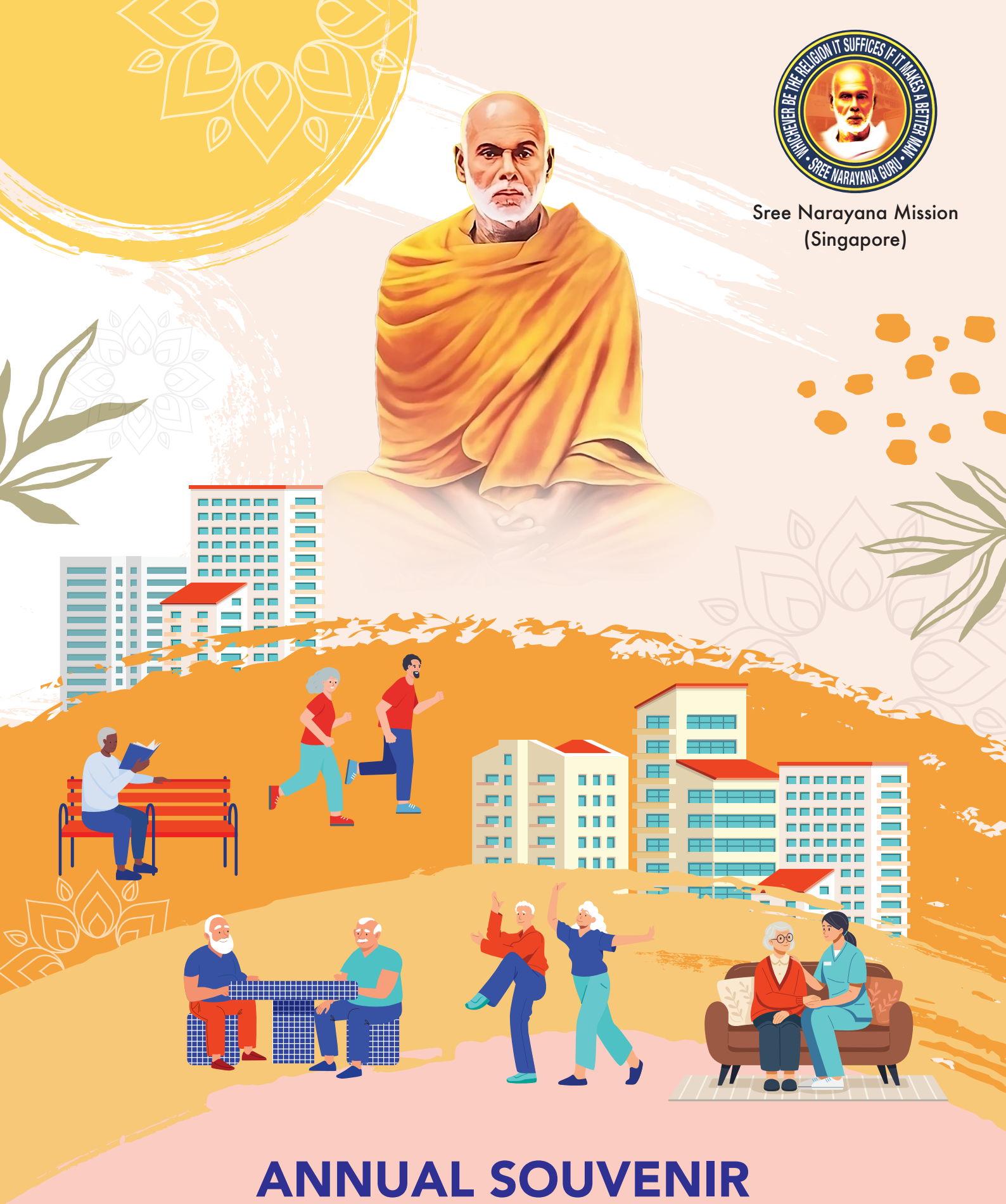




Sree Narayana Mission
(Singapore)



ANNUAL SOUVENIR PUBLICATION 2025

CELEBRATING THE 171ST BIRTH ANNIVERSARY
OF SREE NARAYANA GURU



WITH BEST

Compliments

RAJESH
SREENIVASAN
& FAMILY



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**SREE NARAYANA MISSION
(SINGAPORE)**

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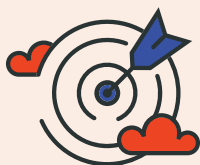
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OUR VISION

Empowering people to lead dignified lives.



OUR MISSION

To provide social and community services based on
Sree Narayana Guru's teachings.



OUR VALUES



SATYAM
(TRUTH)



DHARMAM
(RIGHTEOUSNESS)



DAYA
(COMPASSION)



SHANTHI
(PEACE)

OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES (C.A.R.E.)

Compassion

Accountability

Respect

Excellence

OUR COMMITMENT

SNM shall empower everyone to lead dignified lives by leveraging
strong relationships with our partners and the community



MESSAGES





Mr. Anil Sarasijakshan
President, SNM (Singapore)



Salutations to Revered Sree Narayana Guru

Dear Members,

It is with reverence that I extend my warmest greetings to all this Guru Jayanthi. As we commemorate the 171st birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru, we reflect on the lasting impact of his teachings – teachings that continue to inspire lives, uplift communities, and bring people together.

In 1948, Sree Narayana Mission was founded to bring the values of the Guru to Singapore. His timeless messages of compassion, equality, and unity found a natural home in our young nation – a nation built on diversity, harmony, and a shared aspiration for progress.

One of Guru's most quoted messages, "One in Kind, One in Faith, One in God is Man," calls us to recognise the shared humanity that binds us all. He observed how people often fear what they don't understand – how unfamiliarity breeds distance, and difference, when exploited, leads to discrimination. But the Guru urged us to go beyond the surface, to see not the divisions but the dignity in every person. His vision finds powerful echo in the words of our national pledge – "to be one united people regardless of race, language or religion."

This year, as Singapore marks SG60 with the theme "Building Our Future Together," Sree Narayana Mission is proud to host an interfaith dialogue titled "Oneness of Humanity." Through this, we hope to foster deeper understanding across beliefs, and stand together in support of those in need – helping them to lead dignified and meaningful lives.

Let us honour the Guru not only in celebration, but in action – by living out his values each day, in the way we see, treat, and uplift one another.

Happy Guru Jayanthi to all!



Mr. Ong Ye Kung
Minister for Health

My heartiest congratulations and best wishes to all, as we commemorate the 171st birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru. His teachings, wisdom and values are universal, to forge a harmonious and kind society, where everyone is treated equally, where they play a part to extend help to the unfortunate and vulnerable. These values also underpins Singapore's founding and roots as a multi-racial and multi-cultural society.

As Singapore continues to age as a society, we need more robust policies, and a stronger community care network, to ensure that healthcare and early intervention remains accessible to all residents. In this regard, SNM has always upheld the spirit of serving people with care and compassion, regardless of race, language or religion. It has also been actively contributing to the community care network, with the successful onboarding and operationalisation of its two Active Ageing Centres (AAC) since April 2024. They will also be operating an additional two Nursing Homes – SNM@Riverwalk & SNM@Chencharu by 2026 and 2028 respectively.

I thank you for your utmost dedication and commitment to serving the community, and in upholding the teachings and legacy of Sree Narayana Guru. May we continue to work together to achieve a robust and caring community, that enables its elderly and the vulnerable with equal opportunities and to lead dignified lives!





Mr. K. Shanmugam
Coordinating Minister for
National Security
Minister for Home Affairs

Sree Narayana Mission plays an important role in our community. Since its founding, more than 75 years ago, the Mission has been committed to caring for the vulnerable and the less privileged, guided by the teachings of Sree Narayana Guru.

Through its nursing homes, care centres, and range of social programmes, the Mission does good work to support those in need – regardless of language, race or religion. Many Singaporeans and their families have been helped.

Guru Jayanthi 2025 commemorates the 171st birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru. On this special occasion, I thank the Mission for its valuable work, and offer my very best wishes.





Mr. Masagos Zulkifli
Minister for Social and
Family Development

On Sree Narayana Guru's 171st birth anniversary, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and deepest appreciation for Sree Narayana Mission (SNM) Singapore's service to the community. Your dedication to supporting vulnerable individuals, particularly in rehabilitating destitute persons with chronic psychiatric conditions and caring for the elderly in need, has made a positive impact on many lives.

The partnership between SNM and the Ministry of Social and Family Development has enabled the delivery of vital social services to uplift the community. SNM's contribution stands as a testament to the enduring values that make our society more inclusive and caring. May SNM continue to grow from strength to strength in its mission of serving those in need.



Ms. Denise Phua

Mayor, Central Singapore District
Adviser to Jalan Besar GRC
GROs (Kampong Glam)



Warmest congratulations to Sree Narayana Mission (SNM) on the 171st Birth Anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru.

SNM has been a deeply valued partner in our shared journey to build a more inclusive and compassionate community. Through your meaningful initiatives—from community events to door-to-door outreach and befriending—you have consistently reached out to residents, including those who are often less visible, strengthening social bonds and bringing comfort to those who need it most.

As we continue to respond to the evolving needs of our population, especially among our seniors, this partnership remains vital. I look forward to deepening our collaboration and exploring new opportunities to serve and uplift our residents together.

May SNM continue to grow from strength to strength, carrying forward the inspiring legacy of Sree Narayana Guru with dedication and heart.



Mr. Alex Yam
Mayor of North West District

As we mark the 171st birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru, North West CDC congratulates SNM Singapore for continuing to uphold and advocate his legacy and core values, building a more inclusive and caring Singapore. Over the years, the CDC has worked closely with and supported the SNM Singapore, enabling vulnerable residents in the North West district to live fulfilling and enriched lives, through opportunities to experience Singapore's vibrant arts and culture scene.

I extend my warmest congratulations to SNM Singapore on reaching this remarkable milestone, and wish success as SNM Singapore continues to inspire compassion and unite the community.





Ms. Goh Hanyan

Adviser to Nee Soon GRC
GROs (Nee Soon Central)

Congratulations to Sree Narayana Mission on celebrating the 171st birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru.

The Mission has long been a pillar of the Nee Soon community through your dedicated care for the aged and your deep commitment to building a more inclusive and compassionate society.

In a time when aged care options were limited, the Mission filled a crucial gap by offering comfort, companionship, and a sense of belonging to those in their later years.

Today, the Mission cares for seniors of all races and backgrounds, ensuring that every individual is treated with dignity and respect. It has also created meaningful opportunities for Nee Soon residents, schools, and others to give back. These acts of service have helped foster stronger community bonds and brought people from different walks of life together in the spirit of care.

One memorable moment this year was the buka puasa and relief packing event held in March. More than 300 volunteers gathered at the Mission to pack 5,000 Kidz Comfort Packs for children in Gaza. It was a moving display of compassion, solidarity, and a reflection of what makes our community special.

As we mark this milestone, we celebrate the Mission's enduring presence and purpose. Here's to many more years of meaningful impact.



Mr. Syed Harun Alhabsyi
Adviser to Nee Soon GRC **GROs**
(Nee Soon Link)

I wish to congratulate Sree Narayana Mission in all the work that it has done for community all these many decades.

Few organisations today have the kind of history, legacy and impact to Singapore society that Sree Narayana Mission has had thus far. This is testament to the values of compassion and righteousness that the Mission holds in wanting to give back to the most vulnerable in our midst, as well as the passion and heart of the people of SNM in giving their best for others to lead their lives with dignity.

The work of SNM in the care and social services sector; specifically relating to its nursing home, senior care centres and welfare home, speaks to its ethos of wanting to lift, support and care for the most vulnerable in our society. SNM has fervently continued on this ethos of ensuring that everyone in society deserves care, that accessibility to such services must be universal and the fulfilment of such a need cuts across any race, religion or social background.

Against the backdrop of globalisation, technological advancement and rapid change, SNM's work continues to be a beacon in ensuring that harmony, kindness and empathy remains rooted in humanity and much valued in our society.

I wish SNM continued blessings in all that it does for community and for it to remain steadfast always in empowering others!



Mr. Alvin Tan

Adviser to Tanjong Pagar GRC
GROs (Moulmein-Cairnhill)

This year, we commemorate the 171st birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru - a remarkable thinker and reformer whose emphasis on unity, dignity, and compassion continues to hold deep meaning across cultures and communities. His life's work reminds us of the power of principled leadership and the importance of standing up for fairness and inclusion.

The work of Sree Narayana Mission also reflects these values in action. From caring for the elderly and vulnerable to fostering a spirit of service among generations of volunteers and supporters. Your contributions strengthen the social fabric of Singapore and ties that bind us, and uplift one another.

May the Guru Jayanthi inspire all of us to continue building a kinder, more cohesive society together.





Ms. Anita Fam
President of National Council
of Social Service (NCSS)

In honour of Sree Narayana Guru's 171st birth anniversary, I extend my warmest congratulations to Sree Narayana Mission Singapore (SNM). NCSS deeply values our longstanding partnership in uplifting the lives of communities in need.

During my recent engagement with SNM's leadership at the Strategic Planning Exercise Primer Series, I was encouraged by your forward-thinking approach in reviewing and refining strategies, while remaining responsive to developments within your ecosystem. This mindset of pausing to recalibrate is necessary as our sector continues to meet challenging and changing needs amidst an evolving landscape.

May SNM always embody the noble teachings of Sree Narayana Guru and grow from strength to strength in your mission of serving the community. On behalf of NCSS, I look forward to our continued partnership to build an inclusive and caring society together!



Mr. Dinesh Vasu Dash

Minister of State for Culture, Community and Youth,
Minister of State for Manpower,
and Mayor of South East District

My best wishes to Sree Narayana Mission (SNM) on Sree Narayana Guru's 171st birth anniversary.

I have had the privilege of working closely with SNM as you wholeheartedly served the community of seniors and the vulnerable, regardless of ethnicities and backgrounds. This truly reflects the teachings of Sree Narayana Guru in creating a society beyond caste and religious thought, devoid of all kinds of discrimination.

Beyond your outstanding community work, SNM also prides itself in maintaining a high standard of nursing and engagement with your residents. With the addition of a new Dementia ward and its 2 new Nursing Homes, SNM is positioned to contribute greatly to address Singapore's ageing population.

I look forward to forging more meaningful partnerships with SNM in my new capacity and wish you great success in the upcoming years. Together, we can do so much more for our community of seniors!

Happy Guru Jayanthi!





Mr. S. Devendran
Chief Executive Officer
Sree Narayana Mission
(Singapore)

Dear Members and Friends of SNM,

It brings me immense joy to welcome you to our 171st Guru Jayanthi celebrations. For the first time since 2019, we are gathering once again at our nursing home – a meaningful return after the disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Guru Jayanthi is a sacred occasion that brings us together to honour the life and teachings of Sree Narayana Guru, whose wisdom, values, and vision continue to guide and inspire us.

At SNM (Singapore), we are deeply committed to upholding the Guru's principles. His emphasis on compassion, equality, and service to humanity remains the foundation of our work. Our continued efforts in healthcare and social services reflect this commitment, and we take pride in the tangible progress made.

A significant milestone on this journey is the opening of our second nursing home in 2026. We have already collected the keys and will begin onboarding residents through the remainder of 2025 – a major step forward in expanding our capacity to care for those in need.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on growing our services while ensuring SNM's financial strength and long-term sustainability. With collective resolve, we envision celebrating our 150th anniversary 73 years from now – stronger and more impactful than ever.

We look forward to celebrating this meaningful occasion with you. May we continue to draw strength from Sree Narayana Guru's timeless teachings as we face challenges, uplift one another, and work toward a more just and compassionate society.

My heartfelt appreciation goes out to all members, volunteers, and supporters of SNM (Singapore) for your unwavering dedication and service. Together, we can build a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

Happy Guru Jayanthi!





Ms. Shalini Damodaran

General Secretary (2023-2025),
SNM (Singapore)

Let's Refresh Our Minds and Spirits — And Step Forward Together as we celebrate Guru Jayanthi!

As our nation turns 60, we are called to be bolder and kinder — to one another, and to the generations ahead. Just as Singapore refreshes its spirit and recommits to its values, we too at Sree Narayana Mission must take stock, renew our purpose, and boldly shape our next chapter — together.

This year, we proudly mark 171 years of Sree Narayana Guru, whose timeless teachings of oneness, unity, and compassion remain deeply relevant in today's world. His belief in the equal worth of every human being resonates strongly with Singapore's own principles of harmony and inclusion. His legacy is not one of the past — it lives on through our Mission's work today.

Once seen as a social cultural society offering bursaries to students from the wider community, we are now a fairly large charity running Nursing Homes and Active Ageing Centres dedicated to uplifting all communities — regardless of race, language, or religion. That is no small evolution. And that is no small responsibility.

As Singapore ages rapidly, we face new and urgent challenges. But we also have a powerful opportunity — to create a nation where no one grows old alone. Where community, care, and companionship are cornerstones of ageing with dignity.

This is where you come in.

The Mission gives us each a chance to make a real impact. But to continue and grow this work, we must be bold in reimagining, reaching out, and raising resources.

Today, we rely heavily on Government subventions and fundraising — but the economic climate is uncertain, and the road ahead will not be easy. To secure our future, we must build strong reserves and tap into new networks of support.

However, two key misconceptions continue to hold us back:

- That we are a religious organization — when in fact, Sree Narayana Guru's values are universal and secular.
- That we are an Indian organization — when the majority of those we serve today are not Indian.

It's time to change the narrative.



And we need you to help us do it.

We must diversify our leadership — bringing in people from all walks of life and all backgrounds, who can embody and amplify our inclusive mission. We need champions, advocates, connectors, donors, and volunteers — people who believe in what we do and are willing to help us go further.

This is more than charity.

It is about building a society that reflects the spirit of Sree Narayana Guru: united, compassionate, and committed to serving others selflessly.

There is something each of us can do. No contribution is too small — whether it's time, skills, a donation, or even encouraging others to support us. Every drop counts. And collectively, these acts of service can help ensure that our Mission not only survives — but thrives.

So let us not wait.

Let us refresh our minds.

Let us reignite our spirits.

Let us take bold steps today for the future we want to create together.

“In the joy of others lies our own. Find fulfillment in serving others selflessly.” — Sree Narayana Guru

Enjoy the cultural discourse, Onam sadhya and cultural programmes lovingly put together by our members on this meaningful day!

In the spirit of oneness,

Shalini Damodaran
General Secretary (2023-2025)
Sree Narayana Mission

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees, The President, Executive Committee, Trustees, and Management of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore) extend our heartfelt gratitude to the outgoing Trustees. Your wisdom, guidance, and commitment have been instrumental in strengthening SNM's foundation and shaping its future.

OUTGOING MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Ms. Sunu Sivadasan



Dr. Thara Ravindran

The President, Executive Committee, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and the Trustees, and Management of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore) extend our heartfelt gratitude to the outgoing members of the Executive Committee. Your dedication, passion, and service have been invaluable in shaping SNM into the organisation it is today.

OUTGOING MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Ms. Aathira Unnithan



Ms. Anusha Senan



Mr. Raghavan Mohanadas



Mr. Sreekanth A P V



Dr. Swapna Dayanandan



Mr. T. G Sajir



Ms. Vidya Sasidharan

The President and Executive Committee, Board of Trustees and
Management of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)

PROUDLY CONGRATULATE



Mr. Murali Pillai
on his promotion to Senior Minister of State
in the Ministry of Law and the Ministry of Transport

The President and Executive Committee, Board of Trustees and
Management of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)

PROUDLY CONGRATULATE



Mr. Dinesh Vasu Dash
on being appointed Minister of State
in the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and the Ministry of Manpower

The President and Executive Committee, Board of Trustees and
Management of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)

PROUDLY CONGRATULATE



Ms. Lathika K Lakshmanan
on receiving the Comrade of Labour award at NTUC's May Day Awards 2025.

Ms. Lathika served SNM for more than 15 years of which she was an Executive Committee (EXCO) Member for 11 years, and was appointed Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer during her term. An active member of the NTUC Women's Committee, Ms. Lathika leads Collective Agreement negotiations and has successfully concluded multiple agreements. She mentors new Branch Committee members, gathers input before proposing service increments, and champions progressive workplace practices. Through the Company Training Committee, she facilitates knowledge-sharing with senior management and promotes continuous learning by actively attending courses herself.

The President and Executive Committee, Board of Trustees and
Management of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)

PROUDLY CONGRATULATE

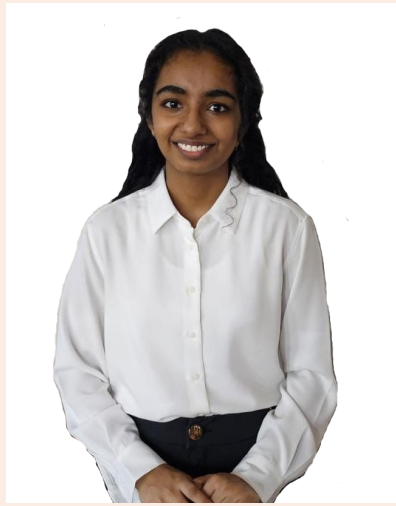


Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan
on being named one of the Top 20 Global Practitioners
in the Financial Times Innovative Lawyers 20th Anniversary Report

As Director and Co-Founder of two legal tech entities — Rajah & Tann Technologies and Rajah & Tann Cybersecurity — Mr. Rajesh brings over two decades of experience and is widely recognised as Singapore's leading expert in technology, media, and telecommunications law. Beyond his professional achievements, he serves on several international boards, including SNM's Board of Trustees, to which he was elected in 2021. He is also a valued member of our Investment Committee & Heritage Sub-Committee.

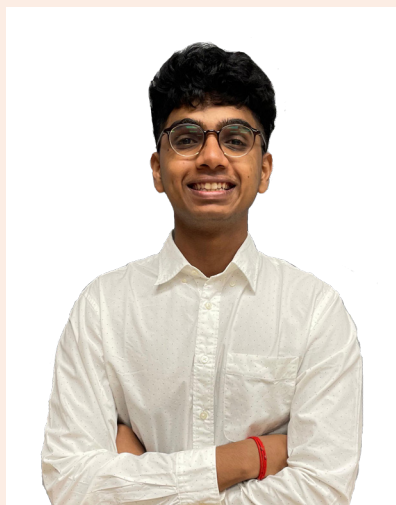
The President and Executive Committee, Board of Trustees and Management of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore) congratulate the following recipients on receiving the Merit Award at the Sree Narayana Guru Jayanthi 2025:

MANSI RAMESH



Completed her Diploma in Biomedical science, and is currently pursuing a degree in Life Sciences @ NUS.

ADITYA SANOJ NAIR



Completed his A' Levels, and is currently serving National Service (NS). He will pursue a degree in Business Administration @ NUS in 2027.



Active Ageing Centres

Our Eldercare Centres at Woodlands and Race Course Road have transited to Active Ageing Centres.

Here, we provide services like compassionate support to seniors with limited or no social interactions and take care of their emotional well being.



Seniors can look forward to staying active and engage with the community through these services.

Our Services:

- Active Ageing
- Befriending and Buddying
- Information and Referral to Care Services
- Social Connectors
- Community Screening

SNM AAC (CARE)@WOODLANDS

Blk 861 Woodlands Street 83 #01-170
Singapore 730861
+65 6955 9539

SNM AAC@RACE COURSE

394 Race Course Rd
Singapore 218649
+65 6955 9555

Website



sreenarayanamission.org



Please follow us on social media for the latest updates and announcements.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES



ELECTED TRUSTEES



Mr. Dileep Nair
Chairman



Mr. Viswa Sadasivan



Dr. Asha Karunakaran



Mr. Foo Say Thye



Mr. Jayadev Unnithan



Mr. Manu Bhaskaran

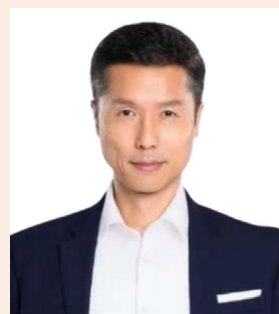


Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan

CO-OPTED TRUSTEES



Dr. Ahmad Magad



Mr. Stanley Sia



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Mr. Anil Sarasijakshan
President



Mr. Viju Chakarapany
Vice President



Dr. Sreenivasan Sreenath
General Secretary



Dr. Ratna Devi Pillai
Treasurer



Mr. Ajayan Ramachandran
Assistant General Secretary



Mr. Suresh Karun
Assistant Treasurer



Mr. Bucktha Seelan
Committee Member



Ms. Kamarshi Shailaja
Committee Member



Ms. Neetha Sanjay
Committee Member

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Mr. Premnadh Sadasivan
Committee Member



Mr. Radhakrishna Pillai
Committee Member



Mrs. Sarala Raman
Committee Member



Ms. Shalini Damodaran
Committee Member



Ms. Shilpa d/o Surash Lal
Committee Member



Ms. Shruthi Ramesh
Committee Member



Mr. Shyam Dayanandan
Committee Member



Dr. Vidhya Dharshini Pillai
Committee Member

LEGAL ADVISOR



Mr. Bhaskaran Sivasamy



SNM MANAGEMENT TEAM



SNM MANAGEMENT TEAM



Mr. S. Devendran (JP, PBS)
Chief Executive Officer & Principal Officer (HCSA)



Mr. John Wang
Chief Operating Officer



Ms. Jezsica Ida Su
Director of Nursing and
Clinical Governance
Officer (HCSA)



Mr. Alvin Tan Wai Hong
Head of Meranti Home
@ Pelangi Village



Ms. Joanna Ng
Head of Senior Care
Centres, AAC (Care) &
Caregivers Training



Ms. Ravethi Achutan
Head of AAC@
RaceCourse, Community
Programmes &
Volunteer Management



**Mr. Anbalakan
Rengayyan**
Head of Facilities &
Projects



Ms. Khirrtana M.a.k
Head of Human
Resource &
Administration



**Ms. Premalatta
Sadhasivan**
Head of Corporate
Governance



**Mr. Raj Kumar S/O
Rawichandran**
Head of Information
Technology & Operations



Mr. Saravanan Rama Krishna
Head of Corporate
Communications &
Donor Relations



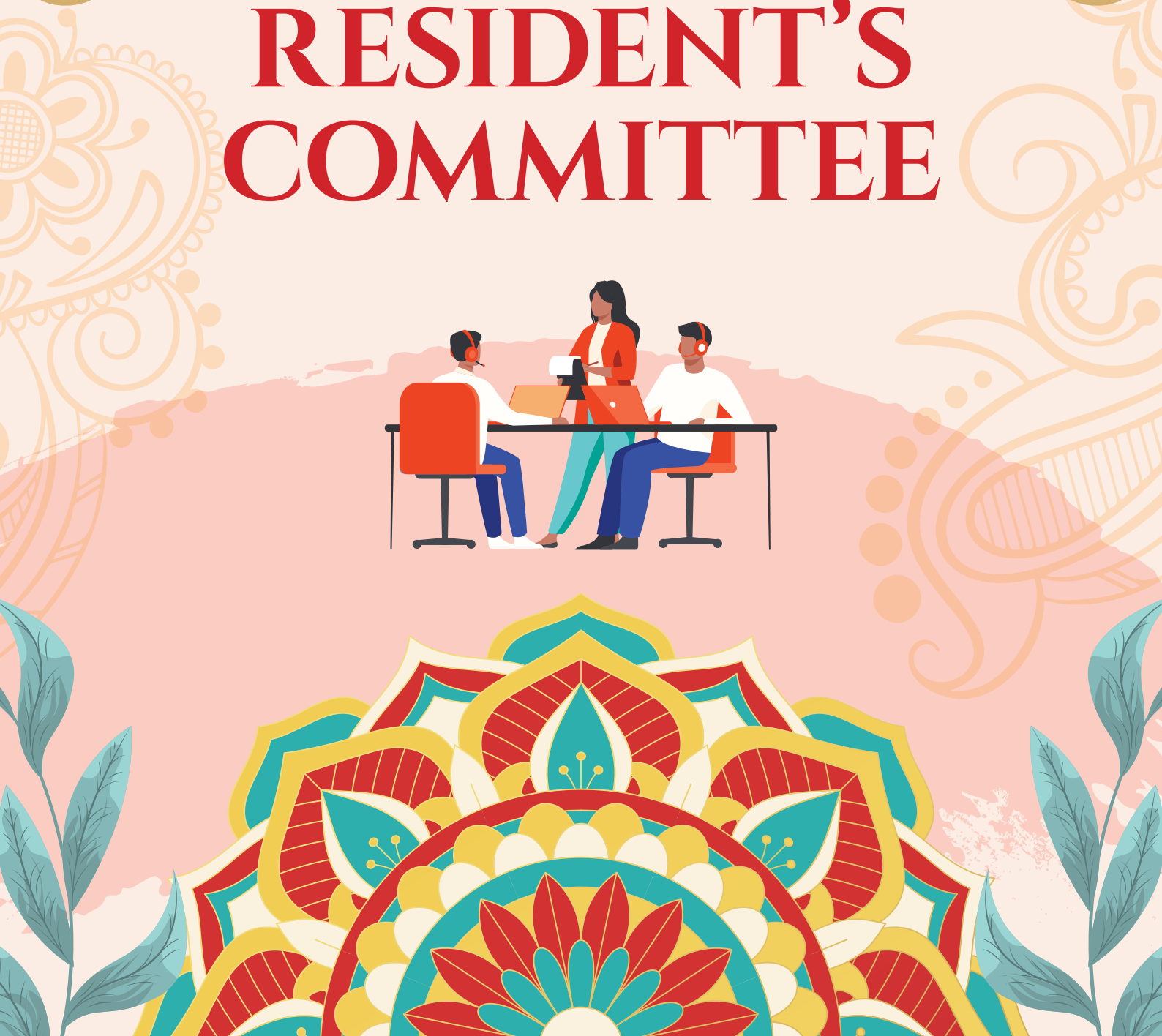
Mr. Sunil Kumar
Head of Finance



Ms. Yogeswari Chandrasekaran
Head of Social Work, Resident
Programmes (Nursing Home) &
Concierge Hub



SNM RESIDENT'S COMMITTEE



SNM RESIDENT'S COMMITTEE



Mr. Ramakrishnan
Chairman



Mr. Lee Ah Meng
Vice Chairman



Mdm. Foo Yong Yang
Secretary



Mdm. Adikal Ammai
Asst Secretary



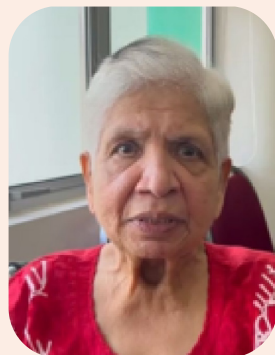
Mdm. Neo Geik Choo
Member



Mdm. Aishah Bibi
Member



Mdm. Tan Took Hoon
Member



Mdm. Ganga Devi
Member



Mr. Tan Boon Tiong
Member



Nursing Home @Chong Pang

Caring for Residents

Our Nursing Home (NH) has been a place of comfort and respite for our residents for the past four decades.

Our professional nurses and trained caregivers provide dedicated nursing and rehabilitative services, and care to our residents round-the-clock, while providing them the comforts of a home.



**Our residents do not live in
our workplace; We work in
their home...**

Our Services:

- Nursing
- Respite
- Pharmaceutical
- Counselling
- Education
- Psychosocial
- Dietary
- Rehabilitation

What are the admission criteria?

We take in seniors who are:

- Physically or Mentally Challenged because of Illness.
- Semi-Mobile, using a Wheelchair or is Bedbound, and require Medical and Nursing Care.
- Unable to be cared for at home by family or paid domestic worker, and tried all other care options such as using day care, home medical, home nursing services etc.
- Meet the Means Test Criteria and referred by Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), the central agency that processes all the applications to government-funded nursing homes in Singapore.

12 Yishun Avenue 5 Singapore 768992

Contact Us



+65 6955 9555

Website



sreenarayanamission.org



Please follow us on social media for the latest updates and announcements.



MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES



Celebrating Togetherness:

Bringing Joy, Connection & Community Spirit to Life at SNM!

This past year has been a vibrant journey of connection, culture, and camaraderie for our Members' Sub-Committee. With 5 meetings, 15 new members (4 Life, 11 Associate), and countless meaningful moments, we're thrilled to share the highlights of a truly memorable year!

What We've Been Up To:

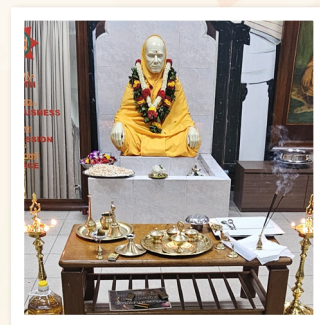
Welcoming New Faces

Orientation – 13 Jan 2024

We kicked off the year with a warm welcome to new members. 15 attendees joined us to learn about SNM's mission and how they can play an active role.

Celebrating Guru Jayanthi

Our members actively participated in Guru Poojas, Cultural Nite, decorations, and even helped prepare lunch—making the 170th celebration truly special.



Cookie Baking for a Cause

18 Feb 2025

30 enthusiastic members rolled up their sleeves to bake 178 jars of cookies – sweet treats that were shared with donors and beneficiaries as part of a heartfelt fundraising initiative.



Chaiya Sessions & Members' Bonding

Get-togethers full of laughter and learning:

26 May 2025

63 members came together for chai, chats, and connection.

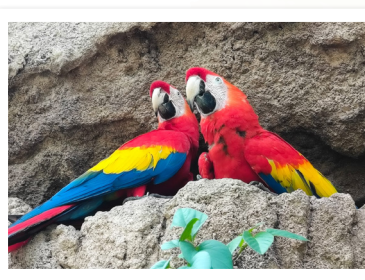
8 March 2025

Held in collaboration with SMA, this lively session saw 55 members participate.

Out & About

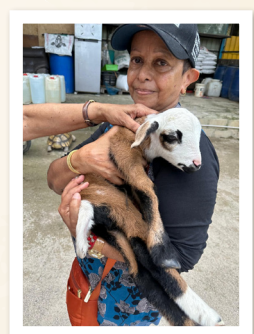
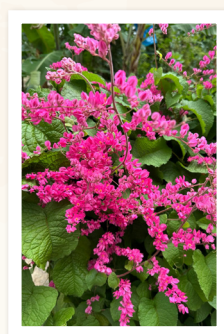
Bird Paradise Visit

17 Nov 2024 with 31 members



Overseas Trip to Desaru

17 Nov 2024 with 31 members



Inspiring Talks for Mind & Body

From health to heritage, our talk sessions offered rich insights:

- Good Lung Health by Assoc. Prof. Dr Devanand
- Guru's Literary Works by Swami Mantra Chaitanya
- Wellness & Nutrition Talks by Ranjeeta Henry and Seema Pereira
- Baking Tips by Vijitha Sanjeev
- Talk on Wills and Organ Donation by Rohit Singh



Special Guru Poojas

Throughout the year, members came together to honor key spiritual days such as New Year, Shivaratri, Guru Purnima, and Karthigai Deepam—keeping our spiritual traditions alive and thriving.

Caring for Our Community

We reached out to members in need, visiting two homes and connecting a family to our Home Cleaning Services—showing that community care goes beyond celebrations.

Ongoing Weekly Activities

There's always something happening at SNM!

- Brisk Walks – Saturday mornings at 7.30 AM
- Yoga – Saturdays at 9.00 AM
- Vocal Music Classes – Sundays at 2.00 PM
- Narayana Smrithi – Sundays at 4.30 PM
- Karaoke Sundays – 4th Sunday of the month at 4.00 PM



Come Be a Part of the Joy!

Our Members' Sub-Committee is more than a team—it's a family. Whether you love music, wellness, food, learning, or just good company, there's something here for you. Join us, bring your ideas and energy, and let's make memories together!



MISSION ACTIVITIES



Spiritual Activities

Narayana Smriti Classes

Focusing on Sree Narayana Guru's teachings
First 3 Sundays of the month

Guru Poojas

Sunday Evenings at 6:00pm and on special occasions



Guru Samadhi

Solemn event marking the passing of Sree Narayana Guru. Special prayers, spiritual discourse, and reflections on his teachings are done to foster reverence and contemplation among members. Thereafter, members are served a simple but delicious Kanji dinner.



Meditation Sessions

Conducted by visiting spiritualists

Vijayadashmi Prayers and Songs

Special prayers and songs related to the Goddess of Education, performed by our vocal students during Navaratri period.



Karthigai Deepam

The Pooja room is beautifully illuminated and special poojas are conducted.



Communication and Participation

We are always looking for new members to join and participate in our Mission events.

Please contact Ms. Sarojam via sarojam@snm.org.sg for the following:

- Inclusion into the members' WhatsApp group
- For more information on participating and supporting our activities
- Feedback and suggestions on activities

Please also join our Members' Facebook group for regular updates and photos of our activities.



KEEP OUR TRADITIONS ALIVE – WITH YOUR SUPPORT

At SNM's Social & Cultural Wing, culture is the heartbeat of our community – from cheerful chatter over chai to music and laughter that fill our halls, and the joy of creating and celebrating together.

This past year, our members have cooked and baked with love, danced and sang with passion, shared heartwarming stories, explored new places, and honoured our heritage side by side.

YOUR GIFT WILL HELP US:

- Host vibrant festivals, lively performances, and cherished traditions
- Create warm spaces where generations meet, connect, and make memories
- Keep our community spirit glowing through activities that inspire joy and belonging

**Together, we're more than members – we're a family.
With your support, our traditions will thrive for years to come.**

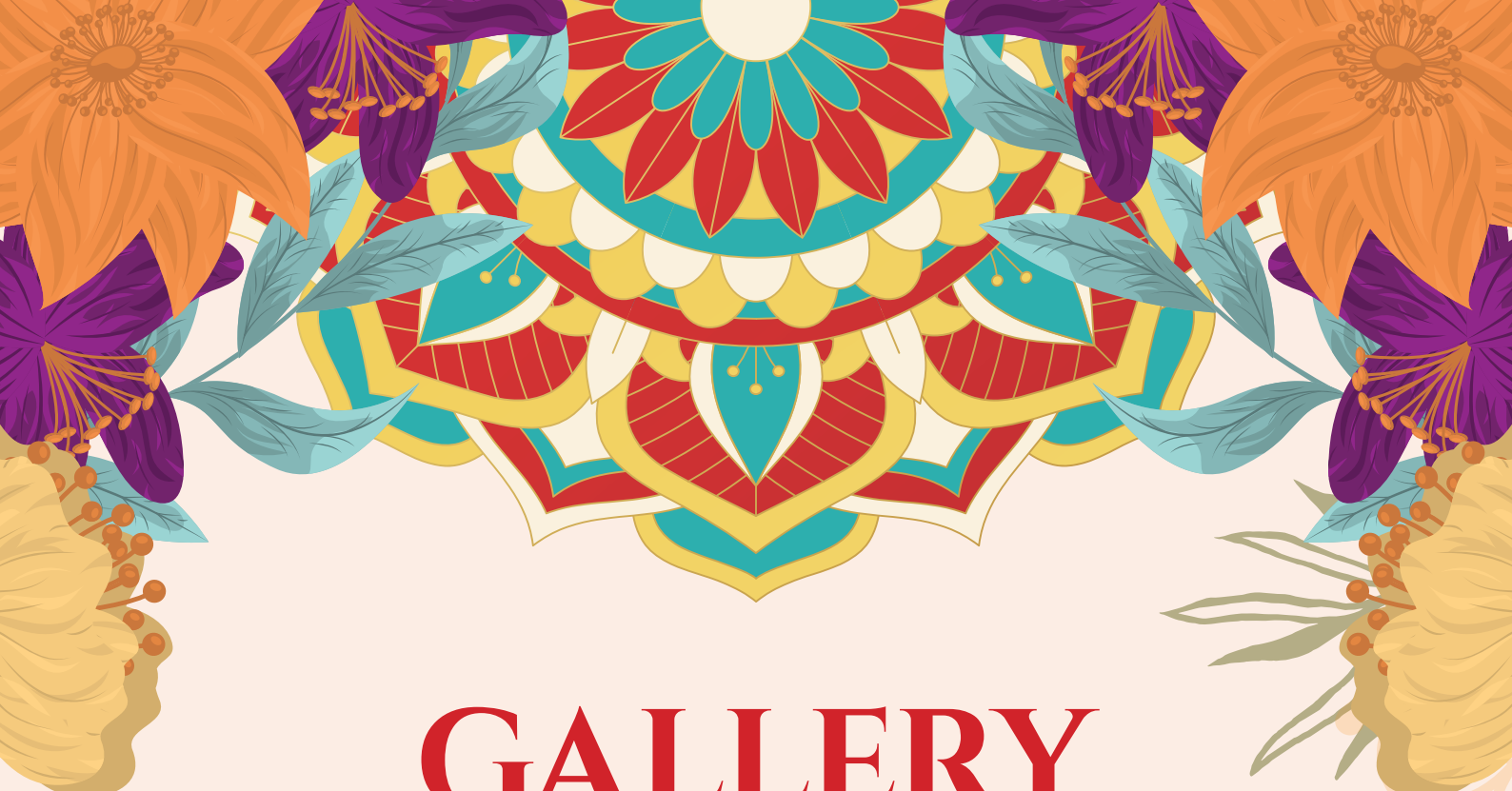
Scan the QR code to give from your heart



UEN: S48SS0016D005

Entity Name: Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)

**Every contribution is a gift of love –
helping our heritage live on and our community shine.**



GALLERY



PLANT4MOTHER CAMPAIGN

WITH THE HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA IN SINGAPORE



THE 170TH SREE NARAYANA GURU JAYANTHI



SNM STAFF APPRECIATION DINNER 2024 (SAFARI NIGHT)



PONGAL 2025



CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION AT SNM



SINGAPORE HEALTH QUALITY SERVICE AWARDS 2025



BUKA PUASA AND GAZA RELIEF WITH HUMANITY MATTERS



SNM (SINGAPORE)'S 77TH ANNIVERSARY



60TH NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION AT SNM





Senior Care Centres

Empowering Our Seniors

To help our seniors age in place, SNM Senior Care Centres (SCCs) provide a communal space for them to enjoy group activities while receiving essential care services.

Our centres offer full day programmes for seniors to interact, socialise and enjoy planned activities like Arts & Crafts, Bingo, Karaoke, Movies and Cooking sessions.



Our Services:

- Maintenance Day Care
- Dementia Day Care
- Community Rehabilitation



Through our senior care services, we aim to improve the physical and social well-being of seniors.

Our Locations

Our SCCs are located in Yishun and Bedok. The Yishun SCC provides Maintenance Day Care (MDC) services, while the SCC at Bedok provides both MDC services and Dementia Day Care (GDDC) services.

SNM NURSING HOME
@CHONG PANG
12 Yishun Avenue 5
Singapore 768992
+65 6955 9540

SNM CARELIGHT
SENIOR CARE CENTRE
Blk 141 Bedok Reservoir Road
#01-1529 Singapore 470141
+65 6955 9555

Website



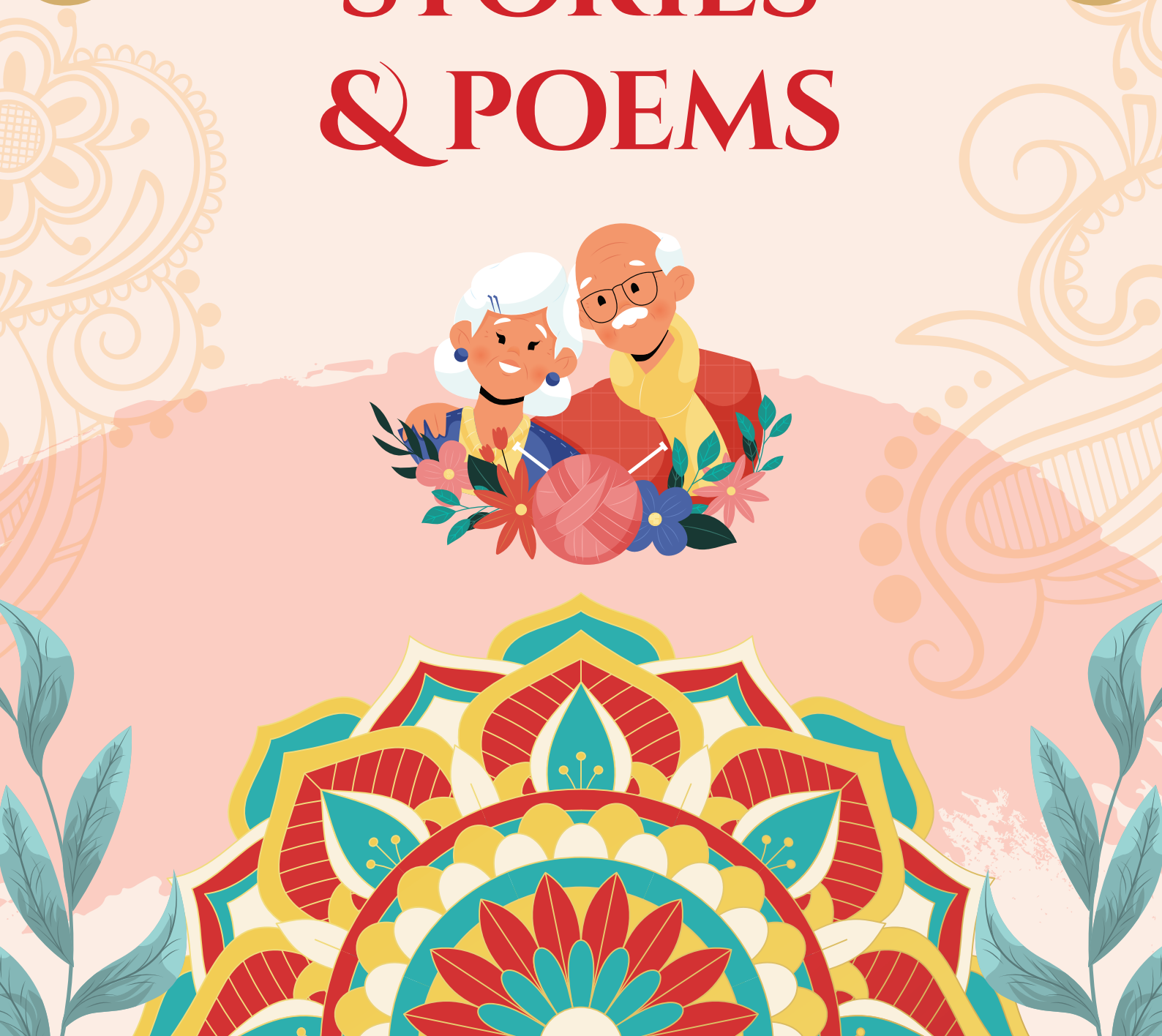
sreenarayanamission.org



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STORIES & POEMS



BRAHMASHREE NARAYANA GURU – THE DIVINE POWER OF COASTAL KARNATAKA

By Ashvith Bangera, Singapore

Sri Narayana Guru played a transformative role in reshaping the social and spiritual fabric of South India in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Among the many milestones of his spiritual journey, one significant yet lesser-known chapter was his visit to Mangaluru in the early 20th century—a visit that left a lasting impact on the coastal region of Karnataka.

At a time when caste discrimination and social inequality were deeply entrenched, Sri Narayana Guru emerged as a beacon of reform. His teachings, which emphasised spiritual enlightenment, social equality, and education, began to inspire people far beyond Kerala.

Arrival in Mangaluru

Mangaluru, located along the scenic coastline of Karnataka, has long been known for its diverse communities and strong cultural ties with Kerala. Around 1912, Sri Narayana Guru visited Mangaluru, where he was warmly welcomed by the Billava community. His visit to Kudroli became a turning point in the socio-cultural history of the city.

Foundation of Sri Kudroli Gokarnanatha Temple

The most enduring legacy of his visit was the foundation of the Shree Gokarnanatha Kshetra, popularly known as Kudroli Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva. Under Guru's guidance, the temple was built by the Billava community as a revolutionary step towards inclusivity—open to all, irrespective of caste or creed.



Guru himself consecrated the Shiva Linga at Kudroli Temple, boldly breaking orthodox traditions that restricted temple entry for certain communities. This act became a defining moment in the fight for social equality and self-respect for the marginalised.





Legacy in Mangaluru

Today, Kudroli Gokarnanatha Temple stands as a vibrant centre of faith and social harmony, embodying Guru's vision of equality and unity. The temple remains a symbol of empowerment for the Billava community and countless others who draw inspiration from his teachings.

Mangaluru Dasara, celebrated at the Kudroli Gokarnanatheshwara Temple, has grown into one of the grandest festivals of Coastal Karnataka. The Navaratri festivities feature elaborate rituals, cultural programmes, and vibrant tableaux processions (*Shobha Yatre*) depicting mythological themes. The temple and city are illuminated magnificently, attracting thousands of devotees and tourists each year.

Mangaluru continues to honour Guru's contributions, especially during Sri Narayana Guru Jayanthi, when organisations celebrate his ideals of service, education, and progress. The Sri Narayana Guru Circle in Mangaluru, a prominent city landmark, stands as a tribute to his legacy. During a recent visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral respects to Guru at this circle before addressing an election rally, acknowledging his immense social and cultural contributions to the region.



Sri Narayana Guru's visit to Mangaluru was more than a historical event—it was a spiritual awakening that redefined social justice and harmony in Coastal Karnataka. His legacy continues to inspire generations, reminding us of the power of equality, unity, and collective progress.

The Government of Karnataka has officially recognised Narayana Guru Jayanthi as a state celebration, honouring the revered saint and social reformer known for his message of “*One Caste, One Religion, One God for Humanity*.” The state commemorates the occasion with cultural events, seminars, and awareness programmes that highlight Guru's enduring contributions to social equality, education, and spiritual upliftment.



MOMENTS OF SERVICE: A JOURNEY OF PURPOSE AND COMMITMENT

*By Mrs. Sarala Raman,
Vice President (2023-2025) & Head, Members' Sub-Committee, Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)*

It has been one of the greatest privileges of my life to serve as Vice President of Sree Narayana Mission (SNM) and lead the Members' Sub-Committee. This journey has been one of deep learning, meaningful connection, and heartfelt service.

My association with SNM began quietly. Though my late husband, Dr. G. Raman, once served as President, my own involvement was minimal—until 2021, when Shanavas invited me to join the EXCO. I saw it as a call to serve, and with music as my compass and community as my cause, I embraced the opportunity.

In 2023, just after my Veena class, I received a call from President Anil. "The committee would like you to be Vice President," he said. "It's unanimous." I was stunned. Unsure if I was ready, I longed for my husband's advice. Driving home, a slow-moving black car caught my eye—its license plate bore the first four digits of his phone number. Was it a sign? In that quiet moment, I felt his presence. And I said yes. That moment of decision reminded me of another promise I had once made—one that continues to shape my journey to this day.

To some, music may seem like a pastime. But for me, it is a sacred thread. Years ago, as my husband recovered from a life-threatening illness, he said to me, "I'm not afraid to die. But you'll be lonely. Promise me you'll take up music." And I did. Each time I touched the strings of the Veena, I was not just learning melodies—I was honouring a vow, finding strength, and transforming grief into grace. Music became my sanctuary. And now, so is service.

One of my key responsibilities has been leading the Members' Sub-Committee. With more than 500 members spanning different generations, the task of designing inclusive and engaging activities was both exciting and complex. We explored everything—from movie screenings and karaoke sessions to informative talks, brisk walks, yoga, music classes, baking sessions, and overseas trips. Our Chaya Sessions became a hit, and our festive events were met with warm appreciation. Behind every initiative was a team of dedicated volunteers, and I am immensely proud of what we achieved together.

None of this would have been possible without the tireless support of Mrs. Sarojam, our Members' Secretariat. Her relentless commitment—whether calling members personally, following up on event participation, or supporting logistics behind the scenes—has been the backbone of our efforts. I cannot thank her enough for her dedication, patience, and grace. Equally vital has been the incredible group of Members' Sub-Committee volunteers, many of whom have served the Mission selflessly for years. Their unwavering commitment, experience, and team spirit have made every initiative possible. They bring wisdom, energy, and heart into every meeting and event planning session.

Of course, the journey came with challenges. Member participation was not always as strong as we hoped. We tried emails, WhatsApp groups, printed notices, Facebook posts, and personal phone calls. We even conducted surveys. While response rates were low, we never lost heart. We kept refining our approach and worked harder each time.



One of my proudest moments was reaching out personally to our senior members, offering home visits to listen to their suggestions and feedback. That kind of connection—heart-to-heart—is what makes SNM special. We care, and we act.

I am especially proud of the resilience of my team. Despite financial constraints and limited resources, we continued to innovate and collaborate. I believe in inclusion, and I'm proud that we've partnered with like-minded organizations to enrich our offerings. Some may have questioned that approach, but I stand firm—true to the inclusive spirit of Sree Narayana Guru. Throughout this term, I've had the honour of working with a group of strong, sincere, and service-driven women. Together, we've navigated roadblocks, celebrated milestones, and stayed true to our mission of creating meaningful engagement for our members.

Leadership is not always about grand gestures. Often, it's about showing up, staying the course, and holding space for others to participate and feel valued. I'm grateful to our President Anil for his unwavering support. His kind words—"No one can do 50% of what you have done"—mean more to me than he knows.

Looking back, I reflect on this journey as one shaped by three guiding values: a deep sense of responsibility and integrity, the strength of collaborative teamwork, and the steady support of finding purpose in what I do. The unwavering support of my team reminded me that success is never a solo effort—it is built on trust, respect, and shared purpose. Music has been my sanctuary, a source of strength and healing, encouraged by the words of my late husband. In both music and service, I found the courage to keep going, even when the road was uncertain.

To every member who has supported us, I extend my heartfelt thanks. Your participation matters, and your feedback is invaluable. Serving you has been a journey of both challenge and fulfilment. I will continue doing my best—for you, for the Mission, and in memory of a promise made long ago, strummed gently on the strings of a Veena.



Guru Dharma Society

A Humble Journey Rooted in the Teachings of Sree Narayana Guru

In an ever-changing world, one constant has quietly endured for over five decades: the unwavering spirit of **Guru Dharma Society**. Established on the bedrock of Sree Narayana Guru's profound teachings — "One caste, one religion, one God for humankind" — this society has grown from modest beginnings into a powerful force for compassion, unity, and service in Malaysia's Klang Valley. What began as a heartfelt initiative by a group of like-minded, service-oriented Malayalee friends has evolved into a tax-exempt charitable organisation that continues to light the way for the underserved and forgotten. Their founding vision - to pass down the teachings of Sree Narayana Guru to future generations while promoting love, unity, and humanity through meaningful action.

Built on Faith, Run on Trust

From the beginning, the Society was anchored by strong leadership and sound governance laid down by its founding members. Their commitment ensured that integrity and community focus remained the cornerstones of its work.

Crucially, Guru Dharma Society has always operated through the generosity of others. Fundraising efforts, kind-hearted sponsors, and the unwavering support of the public have enabled every programme, outreach, and initiative to take shape — and make a difference.

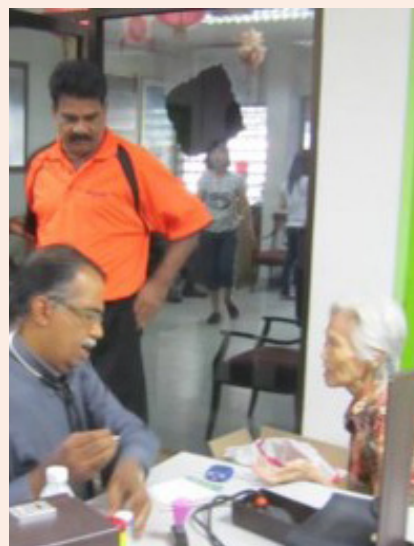
The Spirit of Service

At the heart of Guru Dharma Society lies a timeless principle:

"Service to humanity is service to God."

Inspired by Sree Narayana Guru's emphasis on equality, education, and compassion, the Society began its journey of outreach by addressing the community's most urgent needs: health and healing.

Through monthly medical clinics, serving an average of 30 people each week, and a fully equipped mobile medical unit, the Society has brought essential healthcare directly to underserved communities and villages. These efforts include medical check-ups, cancer awareness programmes for cervical and breast cancer, and vital treatments such as dental and eye care. Over the years, this commitment has delivered healing and hope to hundreds of seniors and families who might otherwise have been left behind by mainstream services.





But healthcare alone is not enough. Recognising that education is the key to breaking cycles of poverty, the Society launched tuition support programmes and higher education sponsorships. Since 2009, its **Back2School** initiative has equipped over 500 children with school uniforms and supplies, nurturing self-confidence and renewed motivation by various experts. The results speak volumes: today, 22 families have moved out of poverty, with their children graduating with degrees and diplomas, proof of what care, opportunity, and belief can achieve. We even have two students who were on the Deen's list, one in University of Malaya and another in Open University Malaysia.

In addition, to build confidence, resilience, and focus on children from socially challenged backgrounds, we collaborated with various organisations, such as the police force, and introduced activities like mind games, rock climbing programmes, and the three-day GADIS camp for girls to provide them with a holistic character-building education.

Sustaining Lives, Nourishing Souls

Since 2004, the Society's monthly food ration programme, consistently worth approximately RM30,000 a year, has supported 30 families. More than meals, these packages bring dignity, stability, nutrition, and peace of mind to households living at the edge of survival.



Beyond physical sustenance, Guru Dharma Society also uplifts spirits.

Our **annual festive celebrations** — engaging over 850 underprivileged children and 98 senior citizens — create moments of joy, inclusion, and emotional connection. These events are not merely celebrations; they are reminders that no one is forgotten.





A Place to Call Home

From humble beginnings in borrowed venues, the Society has now established a **permanent home** – a vibrant centre for operations, family days, cultural programmes, spiritual discourses, and community dialogues. More than just a building, this space is a sanctuary of connection, growth, and shared values.



Looking Ahead: The Journey Continues

As Guru Dharma Society celebrates its **51st year**, its mission remains as vital as ever. Guided by the timeless wisdom of Sree Narayana Guru, the Society continues to align its initiatives with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, deepening its impact on education, health, and community welfare.

Though the road ahead is long, the foundation is strong. The Society remains humbled by the trust placed in it, proud of its legacy, and more determined than ever to serve with love, relevance, and resilience.

Preserving Culture and Building Community

Guru Dharma Society is not just a charitable organisation, it is a living cultural and spiritual community. Over the decades, members have championed rich traditions of performance, sport, and reflection. During the annual **Chathayam celebrations** (marking the birth anniversary of Sree Narayana Guru), the Society has brought the Guru's teachings to life through drama and stage productions – many crafted by passionate past Presidents and Vice Presidents in the 1980s and 90s.

From tele-matches to badminton tournaments, community sports events were organised not just for competition, but for camaraderie – creating memories that united generations in joy and shared purpose.

Service with Humility

In a world often divided by race, religion, and class, Guru Dharma Society stands as a living embodiment of unity, compassion, and the transformative power of collective goodwill. With every child educated, every elder embraced, and every life uplifted, the Society honours the legacy of Sree Narayana Guru – not just in word, but in enduring action.

**Guru Dharma Society: 51 Years of Faith in Action.
And the best is yet to come.**



Chathayam

Spirituality, Community and Charity

*This chapter is extracted from The Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)
by Loh Kah Seng*

One of the landmark events of any SNM year is the annual Chathayam celebrations, named after the star of the same name in the Malayalam calendar. As Sree Narayana Guru is believed to have been born under this star, his followers have adopted the day of Chathayam as his birthday. In Singapore, as in Kerala, Chathayam is a keenly anticipated and warmly celebrated festival of the Malayalee community. It is held in the month of *Chingam* (usually August or September). It also falls on the fourth day of Onam, the harvest festival celebrated by Malayalees.

In recent years, Chathayam has been renamed Guru Jayanti. However here, in tracing its social history and cultural heritage, we will use its old name.



Chathayam lunch
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.

Women and the Chathayam Lunch

Traditionally, the highlight of the Chathayam celebrations was a social lunch at SNM called *Onam Sadya* (a vegetarian feast). This has been a major event with a deep cultural significance for the members. R Asokan believed that the lunch started in 1972, the year he joined the Mission when he was still doing his National Service.⁶⁷ At the time, SNM was recruiting younger members like him. The Chathayam lunch was a significant event in its own right, an experience for the members. Part of this was due to the serving of

a large number of traditional vegetarian dishes from Kerala, possibly 26 items in all. They were served in a certain order. Some of these dishes were *aviyal*, *theeyal*, *thoran*, *pachadi*, *sambar*, *pappadam*, *parippu*, *mango pickles*, *ginger achar*, *lemon achar*, *rasam*, *moru*, *banana chips*, *sarakra puratti*, and four types of *payasam*.⁶⁸

Historically, the making of the lunch was an all-women's affair. In the earlier days, families would prepare the different food items in their homes and bring them to the Mission. However, as time went by, they paid money for the dishes to be prepared at the Mission. For many of SNM's women volunteers, their preparations for the lunch were indeed the real festival. As Prasanna Dayanandan related, there was a genuine 'festival mood' as the cooks and helpers went about their work.⁶⁹ The way the women divided the preparation and cooking has become part of the social memory of SNM. It is a women's history reflecting the spirit of volunteerism among the female members.

There were two chief cooks: Dayanandan and Radhadevi Vijayan. Other women like Sunanda Senan were given special roles such as purchasing specific grocery items in large quantities and bringing them to the SNM premises to be cooked. This sounded simple but in practice, the sheer quantity made it a manpower and logistical challenge.

Preparations such as the cutting of vegetables would begin in the morning of the day and the cooking starts at ten the night before and continues into the early morning. By noon, the lunch would be cooked and ready to be served to about a 1000 guests.



Vijayan was in charge of cooking lentil curry (*parippu*), the first dish served with rice, while Dayanandan made the sambar.⁷⁰ Indira Damodaran was responsible for a vegetarian dish called *pachadi*, served with bitter gourd, other vegetables and yogurt. She would cook it in a large pot at home and then bring it to the Mission Office.⁷¹ Though the work was demanding, it was 'a real thrill' for the women to work together as a team, as remembered by Vasanthi Pillai, who helped cut the vegetables.⁷²



Preparation for the Chathayam Sadya
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.

Renewing the Mission

The lunch was historically the centrepiece of a series of spiritual and socio-cultural activities during Chathayam. Disciples of the Guru from Kerala sometimes came to speak to the members, while High Commissioners from India were also oft-invited guests.⁷³ The members put up a cultural show which included *kathakali* performance, a form of traditional play from Kerala with song, music and dance, in addition to participating in the sports and games.⁷⁴ Among the latter, musical chairs and tug of war were crowd favourites. This was naturally so for the children and youth, but adults also took the competition surprisingly seriously.

The presence of the young and old signalled Chathayam's importance as a family and intergenerational event. It was key to the renewal of the Mission's membership in the long run. Syamala Senan regularly brought her young daughter Anusha to the celebrations. Later, Anusha began volunteering with the Mission as a young adult, organising activities for the youth before joining the Executive Committee. She also became a follower of the Guru. Although Anusha's childhood memory of Chathayam was that of 'a huge party,' the event had a deeper significance for her as a volunteer.⁷⁵

SNM's arts section organised cultural shows and entertainment for the members, often during Chathayam. The big hall and stage at 48 Soon Keat Road, with a capacity of 500, had been built for this purpose. The shows were duly documented by the Ministry of Culture, from which the Mission had to obtain entertainment licences. The scripts of the shows were also vetted. According to Krishnan Vasu, the performances were held in the hall, while the sports and games during Chathayam took place in the vast area outside that could accommodate hundreds of people.⁷⁶

Inside the hall, Malayalam dramas were popular with audiences, while the use of Malayalam reinforced the cultural identity of SNM members.⁷⁷ During the Chathayam celebrations in 1969, the SNM Library presented a dramatic re-enactment of the traditional Malayalee boat race, '*Vallam Kali*'.⁷⁸ The 1972 programme included three days of pooja followed by dance, music and devotional songs.⁷⁹ The Malayalam play, '*Thulaabharam*', was staged during the celebrations two years later.⁸⁰ In August 1977, SNM presented the Malayalam drama '*Vishamavirtham*', which was hailed as 'a great success'.⁸¹ In 1980, the play, '*Neelakkadambu*',



Chathayam Activities



Children's Games.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.



Chathayam Concert.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.



Beauty Pageant.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.



Public Forum.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.



Stage Drama.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.



An attentive audience.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.

based on a novel, was performed at 48 Soon Keat Road,⁸² while the Malayalam drama, 'Sabdan', was staged at the Victoria Theatre the following year.⁸³

Wider Engagements

Chathayam was also an official occasion, allowing SNM to showcase its growing social services in the wider community. Government officials

graced the event as Guests of Honour (GOH) and invited guests. Their speeches frequently lauded both Malayalee culture as an exemplary form of multiculturalism and the Mission's contributions to Singapore society. In past years, Chinese and Malay drama groups also performed during Chathayam.⁸⁴ These broader engagements made the celebrations doubly meaningful to the members.



School students were a fixture in the festival, sharing the stage with members and government officials. In 1970, students from Parry Secondary School performed a multiracial show at the start of the celebrations. This was followed by the presentation of SNM scholarships to students of different ethnic backgrounds by Mohd Ghazali Ismail, the Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Education (MOE). The Mission then made its own presentation that was the keys to an ambulance donated by Chor Yeok Eng, Ismail's counterpart at the Ministry of Health (MOH).

The next item that day was what was reported to be a 'very stimulating forum' on 'The Conflict of Generations'. This involved academics and public officials, namely, Dr Gwee Ah Eng, G G Thomson, Gerald D'Cruz and Dr Nalla Tan.⁸⁵ The celebrations of 1970 alone signified the triple ideals of SNM: spirituality, community and charity.

Seven years later, the Chathayam celebrations took place between 29 August and 4 September, after National Day. Another forum with a social theme was held on 'Developing Welfare Programmes for the Youth and the Aged in our Community.' Don Mathews, the Welfare Officer and Chair of the forum's organising committee, explained why it was necessary to understand and tackle Singapore's major youth problems, such as school dropouts and drug abuse. The event reportedly drew an audience of 300.⁸⁶ There was a public meeting after the lunch, with SNM members Joe Chellam and George Netto speaking in English and Malayalam, respectively.⁸⁷

Matters of Religion and Language

Besides Chathayam, the Mission was actively involved in promoting racial and religious harmony in other ways – values that were also promoted by the Singapore government. In 1977, when SNM celebrated the International Sree

Narayana Guru Year, it organised a discussion on the Guru's teachings. A public forum on the major religions in Singapore was also held that year. Various experts spoke: Venerable Mangala Thera on Buddhism, Abdul Rauf bin Fauzal Hassan on Islam and A Janardhanan on Christianity.⁸⁸

SNM also organised night classes for English, Hindi and Malayalam for the members' children. Various pioneer teachers who volunteered their time and expertise have received recognition for this, such as N Peethambaram, V Vasu Pilla, Perinattu Kunjuraman, and P Sambasivan, whose names were recorded in the 1956 *Building Inauguration Souvenir*.⁸⁹ The Malayalam classes were taught by volunteer teachers five days a week from 6.30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Vasanthi Pillai recalled that when she was in primary school, her brother and she studied Malayalam at 48 Soon Keat Road. This was their mother tongue which their mother felt was important for Malayalees to learn.⁹⁰ The SNM Library had Malayalam textbooks for Standards 1 to 5.⁹¹

The Malayalam classes were historically interesting because they reflected the initiative and self-help of the Malayalee community. Malayalam was not made an official second language in Singapore, yet it was, according to Anitha Devi Pillai, 'the binding force of the community', widely used before Singapore became independent.⁹² As we have seen, Malayalam stage shows were still popular in the 1970s and 1980s. Malayalee organisations such as the Narayana Gurukula (also nearby in Chong Pang Village), the Kerala Association and SNM strove to keep the language alive by offering free classes. However, Malayalee children were growing up learning another second language in school like Tamil or Malay.

In this context, SNM's Malayalam classes, though well-remembered, were not successful.



Malayalam Class at Mission with Teacher, Sadanandan.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.

Attendances were low. Most parents did not see any practical value sending their children there. In 1977, many parents asked the Mission to include the Guru's teachings in the Malayalam classes to make them more relevant. The outgoing Executive Committee thought that the next committee might propose this to the Narayana Gurukula, whose classes SNM could subsidise.⁹³

Unlike the Mission, the Gurukula was dedicated solely to the study of the Guru's teachings. It seemed to have been a rival spiritual organisation, though it was not involved in socio-cultural or charitable activities. The following year, SNM decided to include the Guru's teachings in its own Malayalam classes instead. They were conducted by Vinodini Menon, who was a 'qualified and experienced teacher.'⁹⁴ In the 1980s, however, the use of Malayalam in Singapore declined.⁹⁵

Historically, the Chathayam celebrations fulfilled the spiritual and socio-cultural functions for SNM. The primary function was that it was an occasion for the Guru's followers to reaffirm their adherence to his teachings each year. It also enabled them to meet fellow Malayalees, maintaining their ethnic ties and identity. Furthermore, Chathayam affirmed the Mission's commitment to the wider cause of charity in Singapore. It was at once an event for the Guru's followers, the members of the

Malayalee community and the government's 'Many Helping Hands' policy. It showcased the balance of spirituality, community and charity at SNM.

⁶⁷ R. Asokan at the Forum, 'Memories of Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)', 3 December 2022.

⁶⁸ Loh Kah Seng, interview A. Sarojam, 10 August 2022; Pillai and Arumugam, *From Kerala to Singapore*; Anitha Devi Pillai, 'Malayalee Community and Culture in Singapore', in Mathew Mathews (ed.), *The Singapore Ethnic Mosaic: Many Cultures, One People* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2017), pp. 265-302.

⁶⁹ Loh Kah Seng, interview with Prasanna Dayanandan, 4 April 2022.

⁷⁰ Loh Kah Seng, interview with Radhadevi Vijayan, 26 April 2022.

⁷¹ Loh Kah Seng, interview with Indira Damodaran, 29 July 2022.

⁷² Loh Kah Seng, interview with Vasanthi Pillai, 24 March 2021.

⁷³ John Solomon, interview with S. Suganthi, 12 March 2022.

⁷⁴ Pillai and Arumugam, *From Kerala to Singapore*; Pillai, 'Malayalee Community and Culture in Singapore.'

⁷⁵ Loh Kah Seng, interview with Anusha Senan, 17 October 2022.

⁷⁶ NAS, interview with M.K. Krishnan Vasu, 12 June 2010, Reel 2.

⁷⁷ Pillai and Arumugam, *From Kerala to Singapore*; Pillai, 'Malayalee Community and Culture in Singapore'.

⁷⁸ SCSS M/88/66 Vol. VI, Annual Report of Management Committee, 1969.

⁷⁹ MC 1/72/143, Letter from General Secretary, SNM to the Entertainment Licensing Officer, Entertainment Department, 17 August 1972.

⁸⁰ MC 1/72/143, Letter from the Licensing Officer to Director, I.S.D., 21 June 1974.

⁸¹ SCSS M/88/66 Vol. VI, Management Committee's Report – 1977.

⁸² MC 1/72/143, Application for a Licence, 7 August 1980.

⁸³ MC 1/72/143, Application for a Licence, 1 September 1981.

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Figure 25: Malayalam Class at Mission with Teacher, Sadanandan.
Source: Sree Narayana Mission.

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MY FATHER... PORAVANKARA NARAYANAN NAIR

by PN Balji,

Journalist and Political Observer

Son of the Late Shri Poravankara Narayanan Nair,

Founding Leader of NBKL

*Unionist, poet, stage actor, writer ...
and my father*



I was a mummy's boy, the first male child after five sisters. You can imagine the treatment I got at home. I was a princeling, with every need and want taken care of by my mother and sisters. My father was busy with his work as a storekeeper in the former British Naval Base in Sembawang. He had very little time for the family as he was involved in extra-curricular activities like acting in dramas, writing poems, and taking part in union work.

Literature was his passion. He would sit on the balcony, smoking incessantly and writing poems and short stories in Malayalam, our mother tongue. He got his work published in newspapers in Kerala. He spent endless nights with his friends analysing and critiquing the works of literary figures like Vallathol and Vaikkom Muhamed Basheer. 'Mathilukal' was Basheer's celebrated novel about a convict who starts a conversation with a lady prisoner whom he can't see because of a wall that separates them.

I was a bystander, absorbing everything they argued about. I was somewhat clueless about the people they talked about. But the names of those two literary greats stuck, and as I moved from childhood to adulthood, I made it a point to watch 'Mathilukal'. I became a movie addict.

Nearly every Saturday, I would go to the Canberra Theatre in the Naval Base with my father and on the walk back home, we would discuss the movie - the actors, the plot, and how realistic the movie was. Realism was his common theme.

Bhanumathi was his favourite actress as her films didn't portray women as powerless human beings toiling their lives away in the kitchen. He liked Sivaji Ganesan but was critical of his overacting. MGR's movies were too unrealistic.

The memory of my father came back to me when I watched a Malayalam film in Kerala recently. 'Ullozhukku' is a tale of the relationship between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law. They live the lie they had told each other, one about her son's serious illness to get him married, the other about her affair before marriage. I would have loved to hear his views on who was more culpable. I am quite sure he wouldn't want to be drawn into that aspect as it was too obvious. Instead, he would talk about how and why the family continued to live in a water-logged house, and the message that it was sending to movie-goers. That was the man he was. Always looking for that unique aspect and investigating it in depth.



Malayali fathers of yore never expressed their love openly. They felt their duty was to make sure the family was provided for. My father did that, he gave my mother the weekly brown envelope and left it to her to run the home.

Call it osmosis, DNA, or something else, I took on some of his traits; became interested in writing, started out as a journalist, developed a rebellious trait, started watching Malayalam movies in earnest, developed a love for the language and for Kerala. The other day, I realised that I walked like him, with both hands at the back, one holding the other. That was his trademark.

He retired in the late 1960s, with gratuity in hand and a thousand thoughts and advice in his head. His friends told him to put the money in the bank, rent a home, and live off the interest. I was adamant that he should buy a house and become a property owner, a great dream of his. I'm glad that he listened to me. We were also fortunate that he retired at the right time, as those who stayed on had their gratuity kept for them in a

deal between Lee Kuan Yew and the union. The rationale was that the money, if paid in full, would be spent quickly. Instead, the money would be given to them in instalments.

His retirement was the worst thing that happened to him. Many of his close friends had left for India or England. I could feel the pain of his loneliness and listlessness. Even in that late stage of his life, he was showing me silently to have a retirement plan.

He passed on in 1987. I shed no tears because I knew he had lived a meaningful life.

I wish I had more time with him.

Poravankara Narayanan Nair had served as the Vice-president of Sree Narayanan Mission.



THE RAINBOWS

by Mr. M K Bhasi

The spine of my book
Is loose and broken.
What all things I wrote
I don't even remember.
But this I know:
The dark spots on these pages
Are my tear drops.
These brown pages contain
Nothing but my shattered dreams.
Forgetting them,
I crossed the waves
Rowing against the tides
Looking for distant lands.

In this city humming with life,
In this rented room
Alone and silent, I stand
Pressing my face against
The cold windowpanes
Not knowing how to cry.

Could it be my hopes and dreams
That fused into rainbows
That I see in the distant sky?





Ageism

by Dr. Swapna Dayanandan

As we commemorate another milestone in our Sree Narayana Mission (SNM)'s journey, let us reflect on an important yet often overlooked issue: ageism. Ageism means treating people unfairly or judging them based on their age. For many older adults, these attitudes are all too familiar and can have a lasting impact.

What Is Ageism?

Ageism includes negative stereotypes and unfair treatment based on age, such as leaving older adults out of opportunities, assuming they cannot understand technology, or overlooking their opinions. Sometimes, ageism is subtle; being overly protective or using patronising language. It can influence not only how others view older people, but also how older adults might see themselves (Burnes et al., 2020; North & Fiske, 2021).

The Realities Faced by Older Adults

Today's older adults are active, healthy, and crucial contributors to families and communities, with people aged over 50 remaining an important part of the workforce in many countries (Ng & Feldman, 2021). Yet discrimination still happens, leading to situations such as:

- Seniors are being passed over for job opportunities.
- Limited access to workplace training.
- Early retirement is forced upon older workers, even when they are capable and willing to contribute.

Such discrimination can result in financial stress, social isolation, and a loss of confidence (Rudman & Aldrich, 2021).

Ageism in Singapore and Canada:

Lessons Learned

In both Singapore and Canada, ageism is a lived challenge, though it appears in different forms. In Singapore, strong cultural values around filial piety support elders at home, but do not always prevent workplace age discrimination or negative assumptions. In Canada, while legal protections exist, older adults may still encounter stereotypes that limit their participation (Ng & Feldman, 2021; Government of Canada, 2024). The common thread is that, regardless of culture, age-based barriers and anxieties about retirement or re-employment are widespread.

Building an Age-Friendly Society

To combat ageism and support everyone's dignity, our community can:

- See the Whole Person: Engage with older adults as equals and avoid making assumptions about abilities.
- Encourage Lifelong Learning: Support ongoing education and hobbies, emphasizing that learning is for all ages (Maulod & Lu, 2020).
- Promote Flexible Opportunities: Advocate for flexible work schedules and volunteer roles that accommodate caregivers and those transitioning into retirement.
- Foster Intergenerational Connections: collaborate, break down stereotypes, and share experiences (Firzly et al., 2021).
- Highlight Positive Aging: Share stories of vibrant seniors and promote images that challenge ageist stereotypes.



The Power of Community

At the heart of SNM's mission is a simple yet powerful belief: **everyone deserves dignity, opportunity, and a sense of belonging.** Age should never be a reason someone is left behind, overlooked, or underestimated. In fact, our shared experiences across generations are what truly enrich our communities.

In a fast-changing world where older adults may face financial uncertainties, social isolation, or workplace discrimination, community becomes a vital resource. It is within communities that attitudes can shift, solidarity can grow, and meaningful change can take root. When older and younger generations engage, listen to each other, and collaborate, we build bridges—not walls—across age divides.

Role of Sree Narayana Mission (SNM)

Community organisations like SNM play a critical role in making this vision a reality. Through intergenerational outreach, elder empowerment programmes, and persistent advocacy, we are sowing the seeds of a more compassionate and inclusive society. Whether it is through supporting eldercare workers, hosting public dialogues, or equipping older adults with digital skills, SNM works every day to foster connections that matter.

It is time for all of us, families, employers, schools, and policymakers, to recognise the immense value that older adults bring and actively work to create environments where they are seen, heard, and empowered.

Let us remember:

“Age is not a barrier but a bridge. By crossing it together, we build a future that honours every stage of life.”

As we celebrate Guru Jayanthi 2025, may this commitment to age inclusion continue to guide our actions and inspire our shared future.

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UNLOVING

By Dr. Thara Ravindran

Like the pristine rain receding
Into a black laden cloud
Swept over the dark
Silhouetted hills
Of my oblivion

Like the flower closing up
Into its pre-bloom bud
Crinkled at birth
Its colors indistinguishable
In a clumsy, callous mix of my palette

Like the wind frozen
On the wings of a cruel winter
Its direction and purpose erased
In a permanent amnesia

Like the sand
Hardening back to its boulder
Striking a pact of immortality
With the devilish weather

Like the river running dry
In a heartbeat
Leaving no valid trace
Of the wet green life
It once nourished

Like a song deconstructed
Its notes reduced to noise
Chaotic, unbearably off-key
Amusing in its absurdity

Like the infinite dark blue of your eyes
Losing its depth and shine
Paling into a glassy grey
Of eternal indifference



ONENESS OF HUMANITY: UNIVERSAL VALUES AS TAUGHT BY REVERED SREE NARAYANA GURU

By Mr. Jayadev Unnithan

On 7th Sep 2025, Sree Narayana Mission, Singapore (SNM) will celebrate, Revered Sree Narayana Guru's 171st Birth Anniversary. In conjunction with the anniversary celebrations, SNM plans to organize an interfaith dialogue on the theme, "Oneness of Humanity".

The theme for the Interfaith Dialogue, is inspired by **Verse 2** of Jati Nirnayam (Ascertainment of Caste), a profound composition by **Sree Narayana Guru**. The first line of this verse is widely quoted as encapsulating the essence of the Guru's teachings. These words are prominently displayed in many institutions shaped by his life and message.

This article will explore in depth the meaning of **Verse 2 of Jati Nirnayam**

ഒരു ജാതി ഒരു മതം ഒരു ദൈവം മനുഷ്യൻ
ഒരു യോനിയൊരാകാരമൊരു ഭേദവുമില്ലതിൽ.

English Transliteration of Verse

Oru jaati, oru matam, oru Daivam manushyanu
Oru yoni, oraakaaram oru bhedavum illatil.

English Translation

One in kind, One in faith, One in God is man,
Of one womb, of one form
Difference herein is none.

Background

To understand this verse, it is important to consider the historical context in which the Guru lived. Born in 1856 and living until 1928, he spent most of his life in what is now the state of Kerala in South India. At that time, **casteism was deeply entrenched**. Social discrimination based on caste was rampant: lower castes were denied access to education, confined to menial jobs, denied entry into places of worship, and treated as

untouchables. Caste was strictly hereditary, and children of the lower castes were subjected to the same treatment as their parents.

Sree Narayana Guru himself was born into a caste that enjoyed some privileges such as access to education and trade but was still excluded from mainstream temple worship and looked down upon by the upper castes.

From a young age, the Guru demonstrated a keen intellect and spiritual inclination. He excelled in his studies and began questioning many social customs and practices he felt were unjust. By the time he was a young adult, he had become proficient in Sanskrit and was known as an **Asan (teacher)**. His reading of scriptures and Vedic texts, combined with guidance from self-realized spiritual masters, deepened his understanding of universal truths. He came to the realization that **discrimination is a man-made construct**—in the realm of ultimate truth, **all beings are One**.

True realization, the Guru taught, can only come through intense contemplation on the nature of truth. Through deep meditation in solitude, he attained **self-realization**.

Following his enlightenment, Guru devoted himself to the **upliftment of the oppressed**. He encouraged education, established schools, promoted self-respect through temple worship, founded vocational centers, and spread the message of **Oneness of Humanity** through poems, philosophical writings, and teachings to the common people.



Let us now delve in detail; on **Verse 2**.

“One in Kind”

Human beings have an innate tendency to gravitate towards what is familiar. When faced with differences—whether in appearance, speech, customs, or behaviour—we often distance ourselves. This instinct, when exploited for self-interest, becomes the seed of **discrimination**, and eventually gives rise to **systems like caste**. Over time, such systems were falsely justified through **misinterpretations of scriptures**. This was the social climate in which the Guru grew up.

Sree Narayana Guru strongly opposed these divisions. He would sit and eat with those labelled “untouchables,” challenging the prevailing notion that doing so would “pollute” a person of a higher caste. He famously said that **he felt no different after sharing a meal with them**. Upon attaining enlightenment, he firmly **rejected the upper-caste argument** that the scriptures mandated caste-based discrimination.

Guru offered a **scientific and rational basis** for the unity of humankind. He asked: What justifies dividing humans into different castes or classes? Just as cows are categorized as bovines, **humans belong to one species**. If a man and woman produce offspring, they belong to the same **KIND**. To differentiate humans based on intellect, skin colour, language, geography, or customs is arbitrary and fundamentally flawed. Therefore, **any other classification of humans is baseless**.

“One in Faith”

The Sanskrit word for religion or faith is Matam, which literally means the opinion of the wise.

Faith, in this context, refers to teachings and paths created by enlightened beings—such as **the Buddha, Jesus Christ, Prophet Muhammad**, and many seers and sages—who, out of deep compassion, guided humanity towards **inner happiness**. This happiness should not be confused with happiness that we derive from materialism which is transient. This everlasting happiness is the **peace that arises from recognizing the Oneness in all**.

Since all **faiths ultimately aim at this same inner happiness**, they are essentially One in purpose. Ranking religions or arguing over their superiority is both meaningless and destructive. **Religious conflict defies the very purpose of religion**, which is to bring peace and understanding.

“One in God”

All religions teach the existence of **one Supreme Being**. Sree Narayana Guru emphasized that **Hinduism is monotheistic**—that the **One God** is represented through many forms and deities. In protest against caste-based temple exclusions, Guru consecrated temples where everyone could worship, affirming both **spiritual equality** and human dignity. In some temples, he even consecrated **mirrors instead of idols**, symbolizing that **God resides within each of us**.

Across all religions, God is described as **omnipresent, omnipotent, formless, and eternal**. It follows, then, that this **God is One and the Same** for all. Hence, the phrase “One in God”.

“Of One Womb”

To dispel any remaining doubts about human oneness, the Guru reminds us that **all humans**



are born from the mother's womb. If we consider the collective womb as the source of all life, it becomes evident that all human beings **share a common origin.** Yet, during the journey of life, we forget this shared beginning—and in the end, **everyone returns to the same earth.**

“Of One Form”

If doubts persist, one only needs to observe that **all human beings—regardless of race, nationality, or background—share the same basic form.** Man and woman, from any part of the world, belong to the same kind.

7. “Difference Herein Is None”

From a **scientific, rational, and spiritual** standpoint, it is clear that humankind is one. Thus, any division based on intellect, social status, race, or nationality is both irrational and unjust.

If someone disagrees, Guru advises self-inquiry. Each person must introspect and seek truth on their own terms. If their conclusion leads to **lasting inner peace and harmony**, regardless of external conditions, then **that person has attained self-realization.** And **this is the way of the Guru.**

The highest tribute we can offer to Revered Sree Narayana Guru is to earnestly study his teachings, grasp their essence, and embody them in our daily lives. In doing so, we cultivate harmony both within ourselves and in the world around us.



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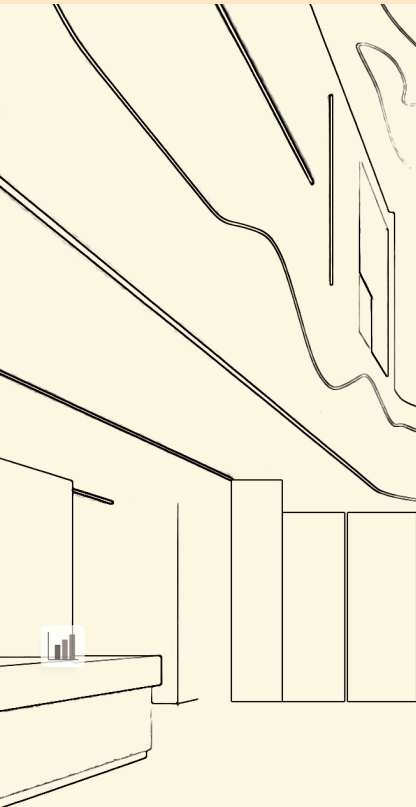
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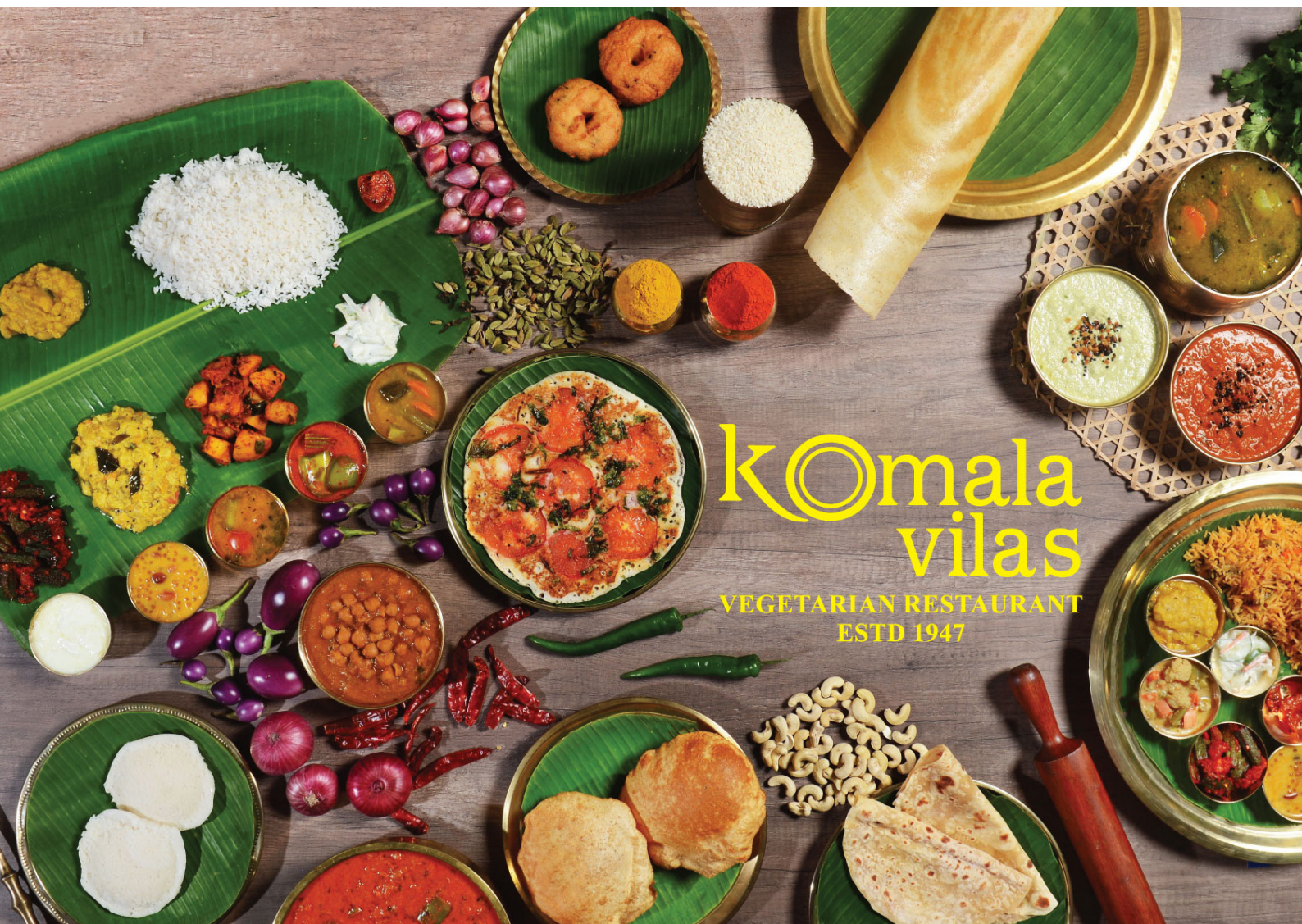


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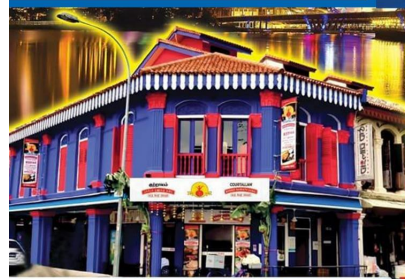
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