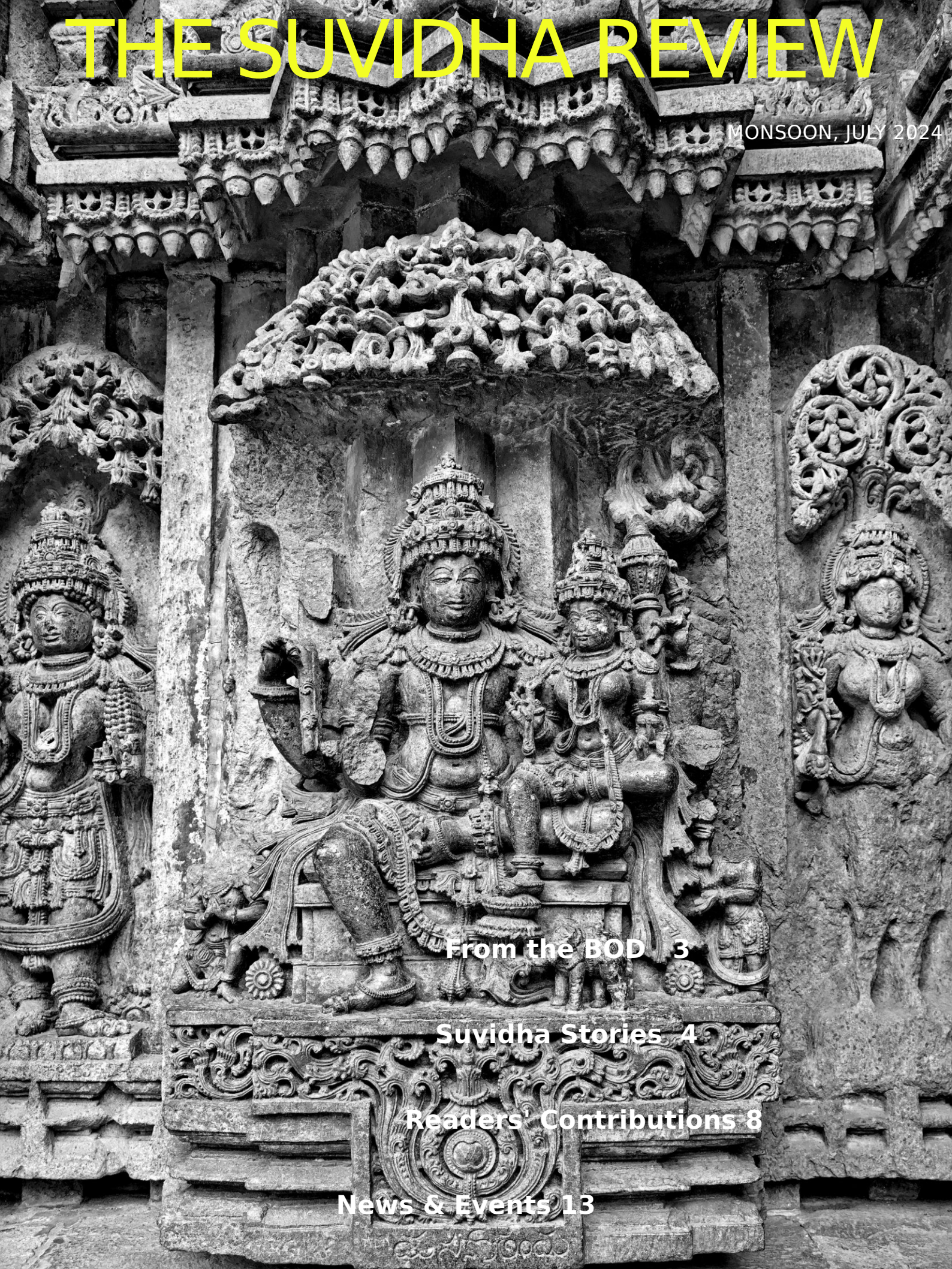


THE SUVIDHA REVIEW

MONSOON, JULY 2024



From the BOD 3

Suvidha Stories 4

Readers' Contributions 8

News & Events 13

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Suvidha is green and fragrant with night jasmines, Champaka flowers and Brahmakamals blooming in earnest. It is raining regularly and that is as it should be! Here is the Monsoon Issue to inform and entertain you!

We have updates on all that happened in Suvidha in the last quarter and contributions from our responsive readers all of which have been appreciated by you and your friends who have seen and read TSR. Thank you for your invaluable encouragement and for writing to us regularly with your feedback.

Two new directors are introduced in the EGM story. We also introduce two couples under 'New Shareholders' and a new resident who has shared the link to his video of butterflies in Suvidha.

All your favourite regular sections await you.
Enjoy the rains and Happy reading,

Warm regards,
Latha Krishnan

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CONTENTS

- 3 From the BOD
- 4 EGM News and new Directors
- 5 Suvidha Trees and Avenues
- 6 Bridging the Gap
- 7 New Shareholders of Suvidha
- 8 **Readers' Contributions**
The Flautist and his Muse
Ashok Dey
- 9 An Unforgettable Gardener
Lakshmi Dey
- 10 The Wondrous Chennakeshava
Temple of Somanathapura
Latha Krishnan
- 11 Book Talk
Shei Shomoy - Bengali Novel
J Gopalakrishnan
- 13 News and Events
- 16 Staff News
- 18 Readers' Response
- 19 Useful Information

COVER: Sculpture of Lakshminarayana at the Chennakeshava Temple, Somnathapura, Karnataka. This exquisite sculptural relief is one of the most beautiful sculptures in the temple. Vishnu is seated leisurely on his throne with his consort Lakshmi on his lap. This relief can be seen on the outer wall of the north garbhagriha.
See page 10 for details and more pictures

PHOTO: J GOPALAKRISHNAN

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greetings dear Shareholders and Residents of Sundara Suidha!

The first Quarter of this Financial Year has been filled with activities! We have had many Open House gatherings, social events and an Extraordinary General Meeting held through Video-conferencing, on 23 June, 2024.

The Board members are now busy with Closing of Books for FY 2023-24 and gearing up for the AGM that will be held in September. There has been re-structuring of the Board Appointed Committees after two new Directors joined the Board and at the EGM we appointed a new Independent Director. The Bridge Health agreement was signed and the new BH Team has been running Suidha Health Center Operations since 15 April, 2024. Weekly visits by a Doctor and a Physiotherapist to the Suidha HC makes it very convenient for residents and staff to get professional assistance. The convenience and services provided by the BH Team have been appreciated by many residents.

Our Kitchen Committee is still looking for the best service provider for out-sourcing the running of Suidha Kitchen. The partial replacement of the Clubhouse roof and the restoration and strengthening of the weir on our lake were done just before the heavy rains arrived.

This Board has been regularly communicating with SHs at the Open Houses and through the email updates sent from time to time, as "All-a-Board" News Bulletin.

The recently held EGM was the shortest and smoothest Virtual EGM in the history of Suidha. All FIVE Resolutions tabled at the EGM were PASSED by the Shareholders. Suidha will now get an inflow of urgently needed funds for our Corpus from the issue of 30,000 Equity Shares for a total value of Rs. 1,90,05,000/= The Board thanks Shareholders for their support to this Special Resolution that got a 92% ACCEPTANCE. We hope to get similar good support from you in the future, for some important projects that are in the pipe-line!

Apart from the welcome dark clouds that

bring us the monsoon rains, the Suidha Community has witnessed some unpleasant dark clouds in the form of harshly worded emails being exchanged between shareholders! It is rather sad that we Suidhaites, who are well educated people in their senior years are writing such emails. These serve only to disrupt the peace and tranquillity in our community! We entreat all members of the Suidha Family to be respectful and kind towards each other.

All Directors appointed by the SHs are themselves senior citizens as well as shareholders. They are volunteering their time and expertise. Most Board Members spend many hours in a day shouldering the Board's responsibilities as well as managing the Village Operations. We are all doing our best and we know that all past Boards too have done the same. From time-to-time inadvertent slip-ups and

procedural lapses have occurred in spite of everyone's best efforts.

Nobody is perfect and no human can claim to be infallible! Please can we focus on all the good work being done and be more forgiving towards any small lapses that happen inadvertently?

There is an important lesson to be learnt from the

200 years of British Occupation of our country. This happened only because of a lack of unity and mutual trust amongst the princely states of India.

We had a beautiful "Vana-Mahotsava" function in Suidha on July 4, 2024. We hope it was a "Mana-Mahotsava" as well for Suidhaites. The seeds of Love, Compassion, Tolerance, Forgiveness, Kindness and Helpfulness need to be planted in our minds. These seeds will have to be nurtured with Togetherness and Unity for a truly Sundara Suidha!

For the secure and sustainable future of Suidha, we need to come together as a strong and united community of senior citizens, that lives harmoniously as one family. That is the only way to enjoy the beauty and serenity of Suidha Retirement Village.

Warm regards from your Board of Directors.



PHOTO: J. GOPALAKRISHNAN

Clubhouse roof sporting a new white look

Extraordinary General Meeting on June 23, 2024

The Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) was held via Zoom video-conferencing on 23 June, 2024. All directors and about 45 shareholders attended the EGM.

The Company Secretary (CS) Lakshmi Rathnam and Dr Nilima Kadambi conducted the EGM. In attendance was Jayarama Korikkar, Practising



IMAGE BY ALEXANDRA KOCH - PIXABAY

Company Secretary, appointed as the Scrutinizer for the e-Voting process. All five resolutions were passed at the EGM, details of which are available on the company's website.

TSR is glad to introduce the two new Directors, Geetha Sudarshan and Usha Kurpad, who have been confirmed at the EGM.

Geetha Sudarshan

Geetha Sudharshan, 79 of Cottage 42 is a US citizen holding an OCI card. Born and brought up in Bengaluru, Geetha graduated with a gold medal in Political Science following it with Post-Graduation in English Linguistics.

After her marriage to Major Sudharshan, Geetha worked as a Travel Agent in Trivandrum. Later she worked with well-known travel agencies in Bangalore and served as Regional Manager for the GSA of Delta Airlines. After retirement, she has been spending her time between the USA, and Suvidha,



Hobbies and interests that Geetha enjoys include: Gardening, Knitting, Reading, solving Crossword Puzzles and some Spiritual pursuits.

Geetha says, "In 2009, my sister, who lives in the US, asked me to vet a place in South Bangalore. I was not prepared for this place which was literally in the boondocks. I came, I saw and was conquered by Suvidha. My husband (a retired Army Officer) and I immediately decided to put our roots here and bought shares for a cottage here. We never regretted it. I love Suvidha - What a place and what amazing people!"

Usha Kurpad

Usha Kurpad, 76, (Cottage 50) is a trained teacher with MA BEd degrees. She is married to Group

Captain SS Kurpad who is a retired Air Force Officer. She served as a Teacher in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan for 27 years, teaching Social Sciences to high school students. After retirement she has been living in Bangalore. She moved to Suvidha 5 years ago and has been an active member of the community. Her hobbies and interests include Travelling and Tourism, Stitch Craft, Music, and Cookery.

Usha says, "Becoming a member of the SUVIDHA family was by a lucky chance for us. We had accompanied someone else who wanted to visit this place. The

moment we drove into SUVIDHA campus, I was overcome by a wave of nostalgia. The clean open spaces, the greenery and calm and quiet surroundings reminded me of our Air Force Stations where we had spent so many years. We decided that this is where we would like to spend our sunset years. We became Shareholders in 2012 and till 2019 we were weekend visitors. In 2019 we made SUVIDHA our permanent residence. And we have had no occasion to regret our decision. During my 5 year stay in SUVIDHA, I have often been reminded of Amir Khusrau's couplet which when translated reads, "If there be paradise on earth, it is this it is this it is this!"



Suvidha - Trees and Avenues

Kenda Sampige Avenue

Kenda Sampige Avenue stretches down from #165 to 185 encompassing both sides of the avenue. It is named after the two trees in the beginning and the end of it - the Champak tree or the Kenda Sampige in Kannada. *Magnolia champaca* is its botanical name.

The Kenda Sampige tree has cultural significance in Buddhism and Hinduism. The flowers of the tree, which bloom from June to September, are wonderfully fragrant and much sought after for it. They are primarily used in worship ceremonies, whether at home or out in temples. They are also generally worn in hair by girls and women as a means of beauty ornament as well as a natural perfume. Flowers are floated in bowls of water to scent the room, as a fragrant and colourful decoration for bridal beds, and for garlands. The timber of Champak tree is used in woodworking including furniture, construction and cabinetry. In some states of India, logging this tree is not permitted as it is considered sacred.

PHOTOS: J. GOPALAKRISHNAN



Orange-red flowers of Kenda Sampige on a tree on the Kenda Sampige Avenue in Suvidha



Cypress Avenue

Cypress Avenue starts at the junction between #173 -174 and the Vrindavan Bhajane Mantapa next to #185 and curves up to #190. There are several Cypress trees planted on this stretch in Suvidha. Therefore the trees give their name to the avenue.

Cypress is the common name given to coniferous trees growing in the warm subtropical areas of Asia, Europe and North America. They are characterised by their needle-like, evergreen foliage which has a pleasant smell. In Suvidha, we use branches of it regularly on our Christmas tree every year.

In Greek mythology, Cyparissus, a handsome man receives a stag as a gift from Apollo, which he accidentally kills with a spear while hunting in the forest. Cyparissus is overwhelmed by pain and sorrow, and asks Apollo to allow his tears to flow for eternity.

PHOTO: J. GOPALAKRISHNAN



Bridging the Gap

Since the beginning of Suvidha Retirement Village, the founding fathers had envisioned having adequate facilities for the Health and Well-being of the Seniors residing here. Any Senior Living Facility must necessarily provide 24/7 emergency medical support to the Senior Citizens who choose to live in such a facility. It is one of the Essential Services for Seniors.

The Suvidha Health Center could not adequately meet these requirements as we did not have uninterrupted 24/7 medical support from trained professionals like Nurses, Doctors, Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians at the Health Center (HC). In the past the voluntary medical support provided by Dr Lakshmi and Dr PMC was an amazing blessing to Suvidha Residents. Due to their own health issues and advancing age, as well as the rapidly increasing number of residents in the Village, they asked to be relieved of this responsibility. The Board and the Suvidha Health and Well-being Committee are happy to announce that since April 2024 the Health Center is being managed professionally by the Bridge Health Team. The Agreement between Suvidha and Bridge Health (BH) was signed on April 1, 2024; we held an Open

House on April 13, 2024 to introduce the BH team and their services to Suvidhaites and the BH Management took over the day-to-day operations of our HC from April 15, 2024.

A BH Team of 4 trained Nurses (including Sister Sarvamangala) ensures 24/7 coverage in the HC.



After signing the agreement between Suvidha and Bridge Health

Weekly visits by a BH Doctor and a BH Physiotherapist adds value to the Health Center Services. The BH Doctor provides Tele-Support to the HC Staff for quick and correct decision making during a medical emergency. BH has conducted Basic Life Support (BLS) and First Aid training for Suvidha Staff so that they can help the HC Staff in an emergency. Additionally, BH provides door step sample collection for Suvidha Residents for all Lab Tests that are done at a discounted price at their JP Nagar Offices. Suvidhaites now have the convenience of ordering supplies at the HC and getting 15% discount on Medicines and Medical Consumables purchased through the BH Pharmacy. We have received positive appreciation from many

Open House on April 13, 2024 to introduce Bridge Health Services



who have availed these services. A few hiccoughs did occur over the past 3 months and feed-back given to the Health Committee was escalated to BH Management Team and acted upon promptly.

Vishnu and Malini of Cottage 181 A

Malini and Vishnu started their journey together 25 years ago. They were in Malaysia for a year at the start but after that they have been based in Bangalore. Currently they live in Cox Town.

They became shareholders of Suvidha in late 2023. They are renovating the cottage 181A to their taste and are looking forward to spending 50% of their time at Suvidha from Aug 2024.

Malini has a masters degree in statistics and Vishnu has an engineering degree, but they have ventured far from these fields. Malini has been running a preschool for 20+ years and Vishnu has spent nearly 20 years in the area of school education.

Vishnu loves tree-watching, especially because it's easier than bird-watching. He is a passionate and loud



singer, mostly out of time. Also, he is a voracious reader and claims to have read the first 2 chapters of over 200 books

Malini is passionate about minimising packaging waste and is used to carrying her own boxes and bags to even the fanciest malls. She gets embarrassed about Vishnu's loud laughing and singing and worry it might disturb the neighbours and try to keep his volume down.

Thungaraj and Sharada of Cottage 19

H.D.Thangaraj and Sharada Thungaraj have been shareholders of Suvidha since December 2022 and started living here permanently from 2023. Thungaraj says, "B Shivannahda Aradhya, Papannagowda and Virupakshaiah are close friends of mine since we were all working in different departments at Belur from 1980 to 1986. Our friendship continued even after being transferred to different places. They insisted on me purchasing a cottage in Suvidha in 2011 but at that time I had other commitments."

After his retirement Thungaraj and Sharada were at Hassan looking after his ancestral property of coffee plantation in his village. They took Aradhya's advice and came to Suvidha as guests for two months during 2022 to experience the environment in a retirement village. Later they decided to become shareholders of Suvidha. "With the help of B S Aradhya of Cottages 20 and 21, we could get

Cottage 19," says Thungaraj.



Thungaraj is 70 years old and hails from Hassan District. After completing MA in Anthropology from Mysore University Thungaraj joined the State bank of Mysore in 1977 and retired as a Manager in 2012. He has worked at many places in Karnataka. He married Sharada in 1980 and they have three children - two daughters and a son. Sadly their eldest daughter passed away after marriage leaving a son, who is now doing his MBBS in Mysore. Their Second daughter with an MBA degree, quit her job in Bengaluru after marriage. Her husband is a doctor and is working in Kuwait. Their son and daughter-in-law both did MS at the US and are working as software engineers there.

The Flautist and his Muse

Ashok Dey

On a very hot and humid afternoon in Madras in 1974, I was racing down the Marina in our project's weather-beaten, rattletrap diesel van.

As project manager for a resort being built on the Covelong beach between Madras and Mahabalipuram, I had battled the whole morning with some thick-headed bankers trying to get some funds released from the loan the bank had sanctioned for our project. I had finally managed to get moneys released by barging unannounced into the Chairman's office and convincing that old gentleman - when you are only 36, anyone above 40 seemed quite old -- that his bank's entire loan until that day to our project would be in jeopardy if I wasn't able to make some payments the next morning.

So here I was speeding along the Marina from our city office as my trusted deputy, Syed Mohammed, who was at the site, had called to say there was a major crisis. He felt that only I could solve it.

Having covered the 36-kilometre distance in about an hour, I found Syed Mohammed standing outside the gate of our project looking very worried.

Now for the back story.

As we were working almost round the clock to beat various deadlines, our team of young architects and engineers lived on the site in thatched cottages raised on stilts made of casuarina stumps. One of them was a young Sri Lankan Tamil called Narasimha, who we all called Nana. A highly talented designer who had worked as a member of the team of Geoffrey Bawa, the internationally renowned Sri Lankan architect, Nana was a gifted artist, an extremely talented flautist, highly unconventional and totally eccentric. He had another quality. He always wore his heart on his sleeve. In short Nana was a character.

About ten days earlier, Nana had gone to the neighbouring fishing village looking for "native" medicine for an upset stomach and found a vendor selling his wares under a tree. Buying a large

quantity of what was on offer, he had swallowed it all. As expected, within a few hours Nana had started showing signs of extremely acute food poisoning and on Lakshmi's advice he had been rushed to a hospital near my home in Adyar. At the hospital, Nana was saved by having his stomach pumped out, but was too weak to be discharged for a few days.

As Nana was recovering, he started playing his flute and among his growing circle of admirers of nurses, young doctors and not-so-ill patients, was a very young, pretty, sad 20-year old girl who came daily with home-cooked food for her ailing brother-in-law who shared the same ward as Nana. Very soon, enchanted by Nana's mellifluous flute and the patient hearing he gave all her woes, the poor girl became infatuated with him. Nana sympathised with her tale of how her very busy husband left home at the crack of dawn and returned very late in the night and could spend very little time with her. Her kind father-in-law, a busy senior priest in the Kapaleeswarar Temple in Mylapore, and she with her two little children and a very harsh and demanding mother-in-law lived, in a house in the Agrahara (a colony for temple priests built near / adjoining a Hindu temple on land granted by royal decree). Nana, the eternal knight in shining armour for young damsels in distress, promised to relieve her of her misery. When his date of discharge was final,

he gave her directions to our project site and asked her to take a bus and reach there before he did.

Now back to the present.

As I reached our site Syed Mohammed stopped me at the gate saying that a teary, young woman had arrived with a small cloth bag in hand and was asking for Nana. She said that Nana had met her in the hospital in Adyar and had promised to marry her. Syed Mohammed had seated her in my makeshift office, given her a cup of tea and asked her to wait for his boss. After instructing our security officer not to tell Nana when he arrived



anything about the young woman and to hold him at the other end of our site, I reached the office and started gently questioning her about what had transpired between her and Nana. On hearing her story I asked her if she would be able to abandon her two little children. The poor girl burst into tears and said between sobs that she was totally unsure about what she should now do. I told her that my wife was a doctor and that after picking her up from her city clinic we would drive to her in-laws' home. Still sobbing, the poor woman asked what I would tell her in-laws. I replied that it would be my wife's and my responsibility to ensure that she was accepted back into her home.

I drove to Lakshmi's clinic, dragged her into my car and briefed her quickly about what our story would be : on our evening visit to Elliot's Beach near Adyar, we found this girl, sitting on the sand and crying. When Lakshmi asked why she was so distressed, she poured out her woes. We had convinced her that it would be unsafe for a young girl to be on the beach after dark and had persuaded her to travel with us to her home.

When we reached the girl's home, I led the way and Lakshmi followed, holding the girl's hand. Before the surprised family - a gentle, middle-aged father-in-law, an extremely disturbed mother-in-law holding on to the two little children and a very distressed husband - could recover, I launched into my apocryphal story. Before any of the adults could react, the two children cried out "Ammaaa" and rushed into our young heroine's arms and she swiftly gathered them and moved away indoors. Then the father and the son started upbraiding the mother-in-law. That's when I grabbed Lakshmi's hand and quickly got out of their home.

The next morning, I told Nana that if he ever did anything like that again, I would first sack him and then feed him to the sharks in the Bay. Nana behaved himself from then on for about a year when I had to conduct his wedding with a brick mason's beautiful, dusky daughter who carried bricks on her head at our site. As expected it was a shot-gun-wedding'.

But that's a story for another day.

Ashok Dey (Cottage 44)
lives in Suvudha

An Unforgettable Gardener

Lakshmi Dey

This is a story about a remarkable old man who worked for us as a gardener in our little garden in Malleswaram, Bangalore.

He was sent to us by a friend's father who recommended him because he had worked as a chief gardener for all the parks in Malleswaram. Munuswamy was old and bent. we could not fathom his age whether 60 or 160!! He always hid under a large brown coat which had seen many, many monsoons. He cackled instead of laughing.

Munuswamy had a wonderful green thumb & our little patch of garden bloomed magically under his ministrations. He was a son of the soil in the true sense of the term and worked mainly with organic manure which he used in large sackfulls. He was very careful with the birds that frequented our garden and never interfered with their nests and their comings & goings.

We gave him his breakfast every morning and he was very particular about the amount of sugar in

his tea. In fact one morning he upbraided our cook Mary and vowed to ask me to fire her for daring to give him tea with less sugar. There was a Ganesha temple at the end of our lane where he sat in wait for the coconuts that were broken by the faithful who came there to worship the benevolent elephant God. One day I heard loud shouts & curses & I found the inimitable Munuswami chasing a beggar who had wandered into our layout wanting a share of the coconuts. He did not brook any competition in his territory.

Once he disappeared for 10 days in a row and I was really at a loss as I did not know where he resided. Then he suddenly arrived at my doorstep with a huge bandage around his head limping & supported by a stick. His story was that he had been knocked down on the road & taken to hospital where he had sutures on his scalp. Imagine my surprise when I discovered he had run away from hospital without having his sutures removed. I took him to my clinic which was



IMAGE BY FRANCIS RAY - PIXABAY

in my garage and removed them. He then wanted my permission to sleep in my garage clinic for a few days till he felt better. Feeling sorry for him I agreed. One night a patient from the neighbourhood came for an emergency consultation. I knocked on the garage door and a half-asleep Munuswamy opened the door. Imagine my horror when I was hit by a blast of the powerful odour of a goat from my clinic -- all of which emanated from my unwashed gardener! I nearly fainted with embarrassment as my patient was right behind me. I asked him to vacate my garage the very next day vowing never to be carried away by silly sympathy.

Munuswamy worked with us for many years till his daughter from the village came to take him back home. A few years later we heard he had started raising goats on his land & been successful at that. He died falling in a hole dug around a coconut tree; a fitting end to a life dedicated to nurturing the soil. But what was amazing was that according to some government land records that his children found he was 105 years old when he died !

Dr Lakshmi Dey (Cottage 44)
lives in Suvudha

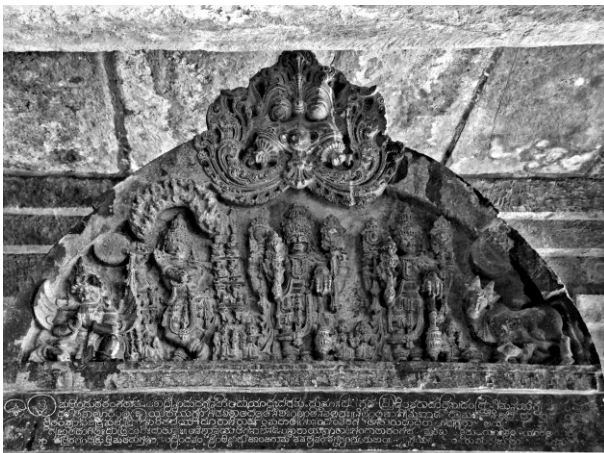
The Wondrous Chennakeshava Temple of Somanathapura

Latha Krishnan

Four of us from Suvudha landed up at the entrance to the Chennakeshava temple in Somanathapura one morning in April 2024. While waiting to get our entrance tickets organised we walked to the photo exhibition about the temple and its history inside a small hall at the entrance. Set up by the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) the exhibition did a good job of whetting our appetites for the wondrous glories of the temple itself, which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2023.

Situated 130 kilometres from Bangalore, the ornate and spell-binding temple, beside the river Cauvery was consecrated in 1258 CE by Somanatha Dandanayaka, a general of the Hoysala King Narasimha III, after whom the town Somanathapura is named. In the sunlight, the temple looked timeless and exquisite. We got the services of a knowledgeable lady guide, Sushama, to tell us more about it.

Part of the stele with inscription in Halekannada (old Kannada) inside the Mahadwara (main door) pavilion



PHOTOS: J GOPALAKRISHNAN



Chennakesava temple at Somanathapura

The first thing she pointed out to us was that the temple is a perfect example of Hoysala architecture. We went straight into the three towers of symmetrical sanctums placed on the star-shaped platform that they stood on, because coming from the wonders inside to the outer glory was a better experience.

Inside there was a wealth of carvings and statues around us and above us each more delightful than the other. The ceiling and the pillars were exquisitely carved with flowers and fruit like bananas. One had an opening flower and another the endless knot. Images of people and animals flocking to hear Keshava playing the flute and several scenes of Venugopala / Krishna's life are depicted. Out of the rich experience within we walked out to the first level of friezes outside near the platform and then looked up at the towers for more. All that is left of the ornate friezes depicting stories from Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavata Purana, are so breathtakingly beautiful that one wonders what an achievement this temple

would have been before it was destroyed by invaders at different years down the centuries.

After more than two hours of looking at it from different angles, clicking some photos, we left the temple feeling blessed yet awed with its beauty and majesty that the hands of humans had given it.

Latha Krishnan (Cottage 181B)
lives in Suvidha



LEFT: Outer wall panel relief and molding frieze around the main Kesava Temple

RIGHT: Matsya avatar of Vishnu in relief sculpture at the outer wall of Kesava Temple



BOOK TALK

Shei Shomoy (Those Days) Bengali Novel by Sunil Gangopadhyay

J Gopalakrishnan

I was based in Calcutta (now Kolkata) during 1976 to 1983. It was a tumultuous period – the country was under emergency rule and the city was recovering from Naxal insurgency. There was police brutality every day all around. Frequent power cuts (locally called load-shedding) used to plunge the city into darkness several times during the day and night. Emergency was withdrawn in 1977 and a Communist government under Jyothi Basu came to power for the first time in West Bengal that year.

My office was situated at Hare Street, adjacent to the famous Lal Dighi reservoir in Dalhousie Square where heritage buildings including Writers' Building, High Court, General Post Office, St. Andrew's Church etc. are located. While travelling in and around Calcutta, I came across other historical places such as the Presidency College, Jorasanko (Rabindranath Tagore's birthplace), Kalighat, Bethune College, Dakhsineswar Kali Temple and many others. At that time I had no idea about the history, the people behind these institutions or their influence on the Bengali psyche. Those were the days before the internet and Google!

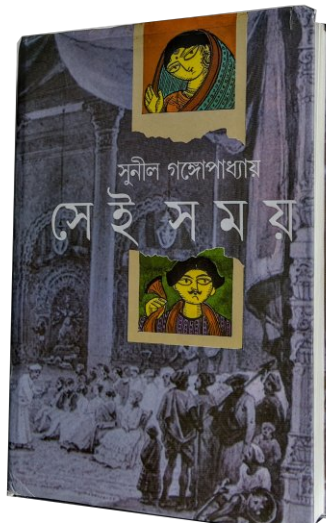
Years later, I had the opportunity to

read *Shei Shomoy* (Those Days) – a Bengali historical novel written by Sunil Gangopadhyay that brought to life these institutions and the characters behind them. *Shei Shomoy* was first published in 1982 as a serialized novel in *Desh*, the prestigious

Bengali literary magazine. Sunil Gangopadhyay (1934-2012) was a prolific writer and author of numerous novels and collections of poetry during his lifetime. He won the Sahitya Akademi Award for this novel in 1985.

The Bengal Renaissance forms the backdrop of *Shei Shomoy*. It covers just 30 years in the mid 19th Century that coincides with the birth and death of Kaliprasanna Singha, author and social reformer (perhaps less known outside Bengal). Kaliprasanna Singha, among other things, is known for his translation of the epic Mahabharata to Bengali in prose form, which is still read widely today.

The central character of the novel is Nabinkumar who is loosely based on the historical character of Kaliprasanna Singha. "The background of my story is 1840 to 1870 AD", writes Sunil Gangopadhyay about the novel, "and the main hero of this story is time. If time is to be brought alive in flesh and blood, it must assume at least a symbolic



SHEI SHOMOY

By: Sunil Gangopadhyay
Ananda Publishers, Calcutta
Fiftyeth Printing: 2015
Pages: 704 Rs. 495

character. Nabinkumar is the symbol of that time. From the story of his birth to the contrasting events in his life, the apparition of his mother in an unknown young woman, and his own sudden premature death, are all continuations of that symbolism, which I hope need not be elaborated upon here. All that is necessary is that Nabinkumar's character has some semblance of a remarkable historical youth who died prematurely. I have not changed the name or biography of any other famous man."

The period under focus here is one of darkness – of ignorance, of religious intolerance, of a society overflowing with vice and steeped in slumber. However, there are flickers of light in the form of the emergence of a realization in a few. And it is these few – including social reformers, carriers of new religious ideas, educators and exponents of literature that the novel gains a refreshing glimmer of hope in the otherwise despairing atmosphere. Sunil Gangopadhyay's astounding style is evident in his depiction of the prevailing darkness and the emergence of enlightenment and social values.

Shei Shomoy has a multi-layered narrative. At the basic level it tells the story of two wealthy Zamindar families, the Singhas and the Mukherjees who are neighbours. Ramkamal Singha, the head of the Singha family finds peace in the arms of his courtesan Kamalasundari. His neglected wife Bimbabati turns to Bidhusekhar Mukherjee for support. The Singha's elder adopted son Ganganarayan falls in love with Bidhusekhar's daughter Bindubasini who is a child widow now. He is thus committing twin sins – coveting a Brahmin girl who is also a widow. The Singha's younger son, Nabinkumar is a genius. The story of these two fictional families is beautifully woven around the actual historical events and characters of that era.

There are several subplots bringing to life the great historical characters of that period. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar is a towering figure of morality, educator and social reformer. His campaigns to educate the poor, simplify and modernise the Bengali language and alphabet were significant. His tireless efforts to reform the lives of child widows culminated in the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act of 1856.

As a young man, Madhusudan Dutt was averse to Bengali language and Indian culture during his youth. He embraces Christianity, moves to Madras and adopts the name Michael. Ten years later Michael returns to Calcutta and becomes one of the greatest Bengali poets and playwrights. Dutt was the first to try blank verse in Bengali literature in his play *Sharmistha*.

Dwarkanath Tagore, the doyen of the Tagore family is one of the first Indian Industrialists to form an enterprise with British partners. His son Debendranath Tagore (his fourteenth child is Rabindranath Tagore), a great philosopher and religious reformer, renounces all his inherited wealth in the cause of the Brahmo movement.

Rani Rashmoni is an entrepreneur, Zamindar, philanthropist and the founder of the Dakshineswar

Kali Temple. She appoints Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa as the priest of the Dakshineswar temple.

Other historic events depicted in the novel include the Indian Rebellion in 1857–58 against the rule of the British East India Company. The rebellion starts at the Barrackpore parade ground, near Calcutta by a 29-year-old Mangal Pandey, angered by the actions of the East India Company and spreads all the way up to Delhi. The life in exile of the last King of Awadh, Mirza Wajid Ali Shah in Calcutta in 1856 also forms an interesting backdrop. Another great upheaval of that period covered in detail is the Indigo Revolt of 1859, an uprising of the indigo farmers against the colonial British planters.

Sunil Gangopadhyay brings to life not just the Indian stalwarts of the era but remarkable figures from the British empire such as the Scottish watchmaker and philanthropist, David Hare who has founded great educational institutions like the Hindu School, the Hare School in Calcutta and helped in founding the Presidency College. John Elliot Drinkwater Bethune (1801–1851) was an English educator, mathematician and polyglot known for promoting women's education in India. He was the founder of Calcutta Female School (present day Bethune College) which is considered the oldest women's college in Asia.

Shei Shomoy depicts starvation and poverty as brilliant plot devices; the starvation of farmers losing their lands in the Permanent Settlement Act, the servants, poor relatives, the beggars feeding outside rich households, the fasting of the child widows on ekadasi, the poor peasants finally revolting to overthrow the whites from Indigo cultivation. Alongside this abject poverty, we also see the development of a movement characterised by a sociopolitical awakening in philosophy, literature, religion, and other fields of intellectual inquiry. This movement questions the existing customs and rituals of the society – like girls' illiteracy, child marriage, despicable lives of widows and the role of religion. We see the birth of new ideas and calls for societal reform – the kind that adhere to secularist, humanist and modernist ideals.

Shei Somoy is a tightly plotted novel based on the actual historical events of a short span of 30 years between 1840 to 1870. It is a must-read if you are interested in the history of the Bengal Renaissance. An English translation of the book called '*Those Days*' is available on Amazon.

J Gopal Krishnan
(Cottage 181B) lives in Suvudha

NEWS AND EVENTS

Ugadi Celebration

April 9, 2024

Gudi padwa, Ugadi and Vishu along with other Spring festivals of India were celebrated in Suvidha with decorations, music and good food. We had a Gudi at the entrance to the club house - thanks to the artistry of Rujita Mokashi, who is visiting Suvidha from Pune. Rujita and Nilima wore traditional Maharashtrian sarees for the function. Later Rujita spoke about Gudi Padwa and its significance. The receptive and appreciative audience of about 70 people enjoyed Nilima's excellent Emceeing. A few of the



PHOTOS: HARI SUNDARESH



ladies came forward to tell us the stories of the origins of the saris they were wearing. A Vishukani had been arranged on a low table and Latha told everyone the significance of Vishu, the Kani, Kaineetam and sadya.

Songs by the Bhavageethe singers accompanied on the guitar by Maestro Dr Vivek and one with Karaoke music were apt for the celebration as was the delicious spread of dishes for lunch.

Rama Navami

April 17, 2024

Rama Navami was celebrated in our Dining Hall with decoration and beautifully clad ladies singing bhajans in praise of Rama. The songs by the Bhajane group touched on all aspects of Rama's life as a Purushotama or the perfect man and sought His blessings on all at Suvidha and the rest of the world. The Prasadam at the end of the celebrations were sponsored by the same Bhajane Group and

consisted of Panaka, Majjigai, Kosambari, Masala Vada, Mango Rice, Khotte Kadubu with chutney, Curd Rice and Payasa.



PHOTOS: LATHA KRISHNAN

Bridge Health

April 21, 2024

A hybrid Open House was conducted to introduce residents of Suvidha to the Bridge Health Team members who would be managing all the services at the Suvidha Health Center.

Bridge Health - a professionally managed Healthcare Provider who have a special interest in Eldercare and the Suvidha Board had signed an agreement for Bridge Health to

manage the Suvidha Health Center with three nurses doing shift duties, to provide seamless, continuous and high quality Medical Support to the Residents and Staff of Suvidha. Weekly visits to the Suvidha HC by their Doctor, Physiotherapist and Supervisors as well as Tele-Consultations will ensure all our healthcare needs are met adequately.



PHOTO: HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

Mungaaru Maley Event

April 28, 2024

The Kitchen Committee arranged a Buffet Breakfast and invited all to attend an Open House afterwards in the dining Hall. The breakfast was a hit with all those who partook of it. At the OH the committee shared the results of the Google Survey conducted and discussed options for improved services from the Suvidha Kitchen.

Attended by around 30 Suvidhites, the OH saw active participation in the discussion. Many voiced their opinions on improving kitchen services and reducing losses. Most felt that the prices of the meals were too low and needed to be increased. Others felt that they were open



PHOTO: DR. SANDHYA RAVI

to the idea of exploring options for outsourcing the kitchen services.

Following the OH, was the Musical Morning with the Theme "Mungaaru Maley" organised by the Cultural & Social Events Committee to call on the rain Gods to send us some cooling

pre-monsoon Showers in Suvidha. Some foot tapping songs in different languages by Dr Vivek Kadambi and the Serenaders and a group rain-dance that earnestly entreated the rain Gods for rain was enjoyed by all the attendees.

Narayana Ranga Mandira Inauguration

May 12, 2024

It was a dream come true for our Founder Chairman Dr K S Shekar. When he conceived the thought of a retirement village, he had also envisaged an Open Air Theatre to cater to the cultural activities that would take place in the village. Accordingly, a site layout plan was initially prepared on the western end of our village adjacent to the lake. It took nearly a decade to materialise the project from the blueprint. Finally the Open Air Theatre named Narayana Ranga Mandira overlooking the lake was inaugurated on May 12, 2024.

There was a pooja and prayers to Lord Ganesha in the morning under the leadership of Smt Vasanthi Nayak. Later that evening, the Narayana Ranga Mandira and the stage building called Sadananda Mantapa were declared open by Sri Vittal Rai IAS (Retd) by cutting the ribbon accompanied by Dr Manjula Shekar and Dr K S Shekar, who were instrumental in the



PHOTOS: C B PRABHAKAR

construction of the facility. Ravi D, COO of Suvidha was also present.

The highlight of the evening was a Yakshagana performance, *Panchavati (Shoorpanakhi Garvabhanga)*, an episode from the epic Ramayana, by *Chithpavan Mahila Yakshagana Mandali*, under the direction of



Sri Arjun Kordel.

Everyone enjoyed the excellent performance and stayed till the end of it.

[Please click here to view more photos](#)

Donation - Garden Tools

May 31, 2024

Dr Kuppe Nagaraj of Cottage 145 spent the entire day of May 31 with our garden staff, assisting them in trimming tree branches, obstructing walkers around our Suvidha lake and other walkways. He assured them then that

he would provide them with the required garden equipment. He kept his word and within the week he provided garden tools from a reputed vendor to our garden staff.

Thank you Dr Kuppe Nagaraj.



PHOTO: SURESH BABU

Founder's Day and Vanamahotsava

July 4, 2024

We celebrated the 85th birthday of our founder Dr K S Shekar and a Vanamahotsava at the Narayana Ranga Mandira that he had sponsored and opened in May. The Vanamahotsava Committee worked together in perfect coordination with our staff to make the event smooth, enjoyable and memorable. To make the event even more special we had invited 14 students and 3 teachers from the Government Model Primary School (Sarkari Madari Prathamika Shaale) in Thalaghattapura. Dr Shekar had sponsored 10 benches to be placed in the front of the Mandira which was decorated naturally in flowers of various hues. He cut the ribbon to gain access to these benches and later lit the auspicious lamp along with Dr Manjula Shekar, the Chief Guest Mr G K Raju, Dr Nalini and Mr D Ravi, our COO. He cut the cake to the music of *Janmadinam Idam* sung by residents.

The cake cutting ceremony was followed by a speech from Mr. Papanna Gowda about the origin and importance of Vanamahotsava. Dr Nalini conducted the event with elan. Bhavageethe singers entertained everyone with Nature inspired songs, followed by a delightful Handpan Drum recital by our resident Neeraj Mistry.

Then it was the children's turn to present a skit about conservation, planting trees, and



PHOTO: ASHOK DEY



PHOTO: ASHOK DEY



PHOTO: SVS SASTRY



PHOTO: ASHOK DEY



PHOTO: LATHA KRISHNAN



PHOTO: SVS SASTRY

protecting the environment. They acted, sang and trooped about the stage and their teacher later explained the performance. Another song by Mr Prasad of # 43 and Vote of Thanks by Mr Suresh Babu signalled the end of the event at the Mandira. Thanks to Jaisim, our beloved resident architect, Syed Asif, photographer of Times of India, Bangalore was also present to

click photos.

Everyone partook of the tasty cake and other refreshments and then went into the land of our green Suvidha to make it greener by planting trees. Our landscape staff helped everyone plant trees in different areas of Suvidha.

New Resident of Suvidha

July 4, 2024

Prasad Rao is a new resident of cottage # 43. He is a Consultant Metallurgist offering consultations to manufacturing industries. A post graduate in Metallurgy from IISC, Bangalore, Prasad spent 3 years in Saudi Arabia, 15 years in the UAE, and 5 years in Kuala Lumpur and is now based in Suvidha. "I love



nature and enjoy watching it. I also love capturing them on camera and videographing animals, plants, insects, etc. I have a YouTube channel where I

am posting all my collections for the past 10 years. When I saw the natural ambience of Suvidha, I fell in love with this place. I locked up my house in Vijayanagar and shifted here. I have been enjoying the pleasant atmosphere and pleasant people around. Below I am posting the link to a video of mine where one can see swarming butterflies."

[Butterflies of Suvidha](#)

NEWS AND EVENTS - SUVIDHA STAFF

Our Transportation Specialists

Shashi Kumar and Manjunath, our transportation specialists, have been our main transporters for a long time. They are part of what makes Suvidha, a wonderful place to live in and yet be connected to the rest of the world.

Shashi Kumar

Shashi joined Suvidha in 2010 as a young man as driver of the company. He stayed outside Suvidha till the staff quarters were built in 2014. Shashi hails from Mandya District. He visits his parents and landed property there once every month.

Shashi married Shashikala in Mandya after joining Suvidha. They are parents to two children - a daughter, Lavanya, studying in Class 6 and a son, Gahan, studying in Class 3 in a school in Thalaghattapura. "Although I had

to drive different automobiles in the beginning transporting



people from Bangalore Hospital and back from Suvidha as well as others, after the two cars with the Suvidha logo were bought, I have been driving them carefully. Also I drive the cars of some of the residents who want to travel in their own car. I enjoy and like working in Suvidha because it is beautiful all year round and the people living here are very encouraging and kind to me. It is also convenient for me to live in the staff quarters with my family and be of service to the residents of Suvidha at any time of the day or night," says Shashi.

Manjunath B V

Manjunath has been working in Suvidha for the past 12 years. There were two cars at that time and as the number of residents increased there was the need for two car drivers. Manjunath belongs to Bengaluru and lives close to Suvidha in Thalaghattapura along with his wife, Latha and his daughter Meghana, who is completing her final year BCA degree at BMS College, Basavanagudi. She is



planning to pursue her studies further by doing her post graduation MCA, which provides her better opportunity to get employed. Manjunath is very proud of his studious daughter and believes that he should give his daughter the best education he can so that she has a good future. Manjunath's parents passed away some years ago but his siblings are all around Bengaluru. He is happy they are all nearby and he is blessed with

a steady job in Suvridha.

"I like working in Suvridha because the work atmosphere is very good. The residents here are all very cooperative and

value my work for them. They are also kind and generous. That is why I don't consider working anywhere else. This is a good company and it is a pleasure to

do my job without tension. I hope the future is also going to be good for me and the company," says Manjunath.

Megh Malhar - A Walk in the Rain

Walking in the rain in our Adbhuta Suvridha you will see colourful Umbrellas bobbing in different hues used by none other than our dedicated Staff pounding the pavements of Suvridha with a smile

.....using ,say, a royal purple colour umbrella! oh ! it must then be our wonder-women or men of the Gardens - a Muniratna , Yashodha or Shivalinga

.....Or our Superwomen of Housekeeping , say, a Durga, Ayyamma or Razia Bi with Magenta pink Umbrellas matching their lovely sarees , sashaying flamboyantly towards



a Ningappa or Pandu , dashing off with a black umbrella, keeping the fragrant scent of a Sambar or Majjige Huli going... in the hot kitchen fires !!!

Black Umbrella ... they cannot be missed!

..... Our staff , our backbone, were given these beautiful Umbrellas by Mrs Saras and Mr Ravi Subbaraman of Cottage # 16 as requested by Director and Housekeeping Committee In-Charge, Mrs Usha Kurpad.

The Subbaramans procured these colourful Umbrellas from NADE , National Association of Disabled's Enterprises, an NGO based in Mumbai with a mission to create opportunities for the differently abled section of our society and provide them with opportunities for a better life. These umbrellas are made under the brand name NETHRA, by blind persons and assembled by people with speech and hearing impairment.

This labour of love is a treasure for our Staff - and mutually beneficial.

Text and photos by Ravi and Saras Subbaraman- Cottage 16



their welcoming Madam's home

.....Or our polite and gentle Office staff - say , a Lakshmisha or Pushpa - ever ready to traipse across our grassland with a black umbrella, ready to take stock!

.....Or , how can I miss our ever attentive Kitchen staff , say,

.....Or our " Men of no-nonsense business", the Security Guards, Drivers and Maintenance Staff , say a Rangappa or Manjunath or Mahesh, breathing down car arrivals at the entry point or plumbing into a black hole with a

READERS' RESPONSE

Let me begin by thanking you for publishing the TSR exactly on time, as always. In reading the latest issue, one gets to appreciate the hard work that goes into putting it together and then working on the content to fit the layout.

Thank you also for publishing my poem about TSR in the reader responses column. I am grateful for the opportunity that it provides for a larger number of people to read my poems.

Please continue the good work, and should you require any support or assistance in reviewing materials for inclusion in future issues please feel free to contact me. I always appreciate your untiring and sustaining efforts to produce a magazine of EXCELLENCE!

Hari Sundaresh, Cottage 46
Suvidha

Thank you for never forgetting to send me a copy of this wonderful

TSR. I wait for it every quarter.

Rupa Ramesh, Cottage 155
Bangalore

You have outdone yourself as usual! Amazing and enlightening! It will take some time for me to go through the whole thing in detail!

Congratulations ! God bless you!

Iris Rajiva, Cottage 76
Suvidha

A big Thank you to everyone who came to our wedding. That day we realized the value of Suvidha as one family. Thanks a lot to Latha aunty for publishing our wedding photos with a nice message in the Suvidha Newsletter. It was great getting to know all of you and seeking your blessings. We hope to celebrate many more of our life's milestones along with the Suvidha community.

Gowri and Akash

(Daughter and son-in-law of Kannan of #22-23)
USA

I am very thankful that I was featured in this newsletter. Thank you.

Bharamappa,
Suvidha Staff

Thanks for the lovely compilation in TSR introducing me and my siblings who are also shareholders in Suvidha.

Vandana Sridhar Cottage 161
Bangalore

Delightful reading as usual! The stories are so lovely to read.

Thank you Team TSR!

Nalini Nanjudiah
Bangalore

Trust that by the Grace of God, this mail finds you all in the best of your spirits. Thanks for the magazine and remembering me. Dog rescue and useful plants articles are very good.

With Love and Prayers for all,

Vijaya Lakshmi
Mysore

We solicit your contribution to THE SUVIDHA REVIEW

Please share short articles (about 400 words) along with photographs
You may write about your childhood memories, places you visited,
interesting books you have read, short stories, poems, achievements of
your grand children or any other interesting events.

Please write to suvidha.review@gmail.com

USEFUL INFORMATION

Please click on the company logo for details.

ASSISTED LIVING SERVICES



1800 121 2323 /080-3355 4554
Elder Care | Critical Care |
Nursing | Trained Attendants



+91 7288818181 / 939 2682922
Home Care |Healthcare
assistance | Daily Care |
Emergency Care




+080-4580-6666
Elder Care | Emergency Services
| Concierge Services

HOME NURSING SERVICES



1800 103 4530 /41410029:
Physiotherapy | Nursing |
Caregivers | Stroke Care | Lab
Tests



080 45683738/080 30752584
Registered Nurses | Nursing Care
|Doctors | Physiotherapy |Lab
Tests



+91 88800 04422
Nursing Care |Physiotherapy |
Home Hospitalization | Doctor
Visits

MEDICINES - HOME DELIVERY

Shantha Pharma
88677 81822 & 99860 03614
Neighbourhood pharmacy on
Kanakapura Road offering
same day delivery of
medicines



An e-pharma portal that offers
authenticated prescription and
Over the Counter (OTC)
medicine along with other
health products.



Trusted online platform of
Apollo Hospitals for Prescripion
Medicine, Health & Nutrition
Foods and OTC medicines

TAXI SERVICES

Balaji Taxi Services
080 5077 1881 &
98453 65245

Nandi Taxi
Ravi Gowda
09980451515

Pushpa Rathna Cabs
Ramesh
99010 51113

Auto Riksha
Narasimha Raju
9900327822 / 9980627163

GROCERY & VEGETABLES

Market Fresh

97437 66000 & 97439 66000

Neighbourhood store for immediate delivery of your grocery and vegetables



Online delivery service for grocery goods, home essentials and food supplies



An online platform for buying vegetables and grocery items

MEDICAL LABORATORY - HOME COLLECTION



080888 87108
Reliable Laboratory Service



080-39885050
Free Home Collection



94498 66287
080 2531 8550
Very reliable

OPTICIAN/AUDIOLOGIST SERVICES AT HOME

Ujala Opticians

Rahul - 88922 88544
Eye checkup at home



1800-102-6886
A certified refractionist will visit you with latest eye testing machines & 100 trial frames



080 4200 8902 /
99805 10040
Home Hearing Checkup