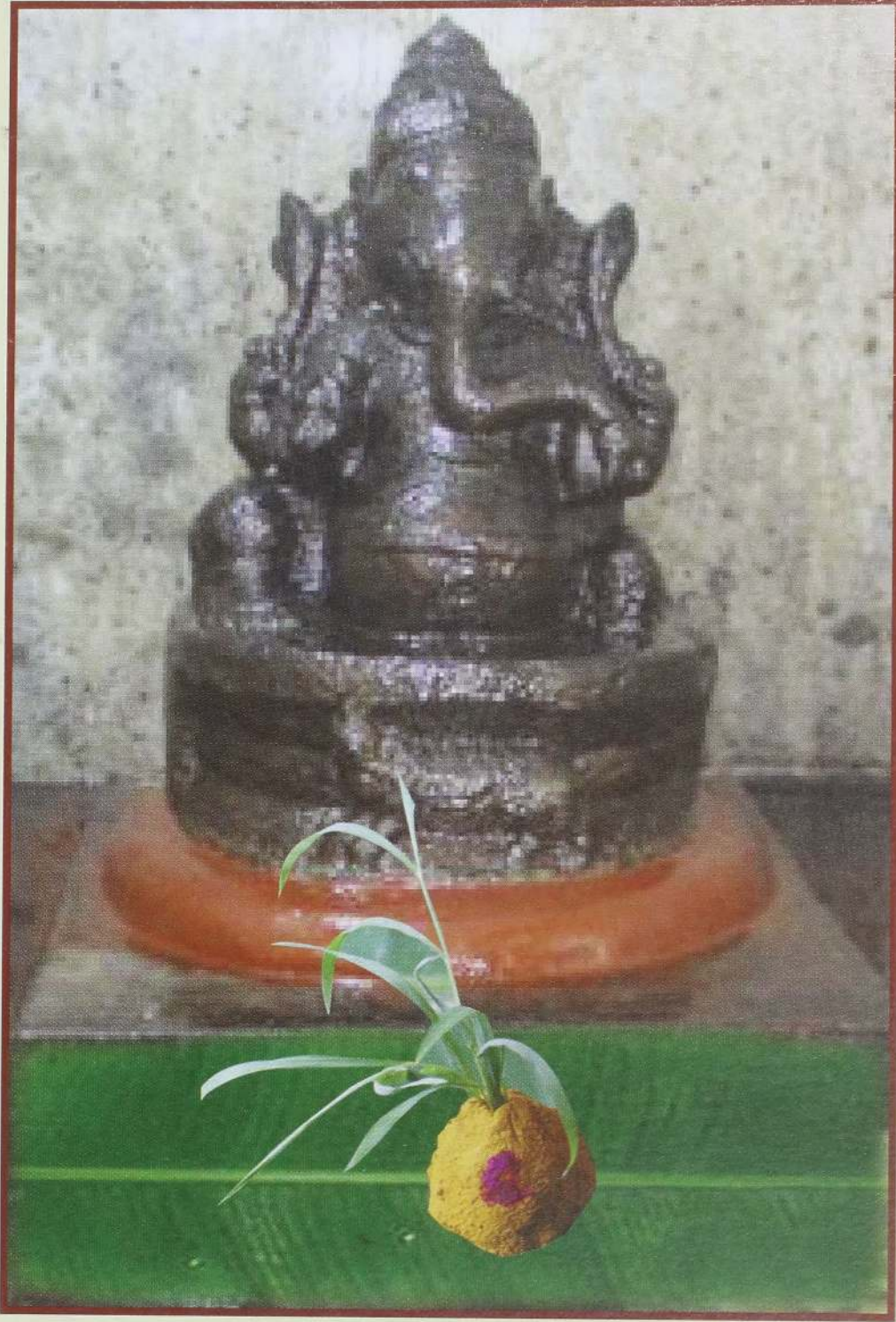


KAILAS 'AALAM'

The Legend of Our Times





**Gajaanam Bhoothaganaadhi
Sevitham
Kapittha Jambu Phala Saara
Bakshanam
Uma Sutham Shoka Vinaasha
Karaanam
Namaami Vigneshwara Paadha
Pankajam**

I prostrate myself before the lotus-feet of Vigneshwara, the son of Uma, the cause of the destruction of sorrow, who is served by the hos of Bhoothagans etc., who has the face of an elephant, who partakes of the essence of Kapittha and Jambu fruits

Preface

As you flip through the pages of this Coffee Book Edition put together by me and my compatriot Ananth Palakidnar, you will, I am sure, be surprised to find the common thread that runs through the entire book - appreciations and tributes paid to a great man who has left behind an untold legacy. The Book we also hope would help the younger generation to get an insight into the life and times of a great man who worked tirelessly to bring glory to an institution that stood out among the rest. This book, we are quite sure, must be preserved for posterity. In the vicissitudes of life, Mr Kailasapillai is a rare occurrence - a shining example of a shooting star as it were!

In the words of Tamil scholar Dr. Aru Thirumurugan "Aiyah is our Banyan tree. Our needy people are under his shade. Of course the depth of his compassion and love is immeasurable like an ocean. As far as his knowledge and intelligence goes, I would refer to both these aspects as 'Aalam' in my mother tongue".

I am sure for those who willingly contributed, in some cases within a twenty- four hour notice giving them very little time even to surmise, it would have been nostalgic recalling their hey days in employment in a company that was heralded as almost the best in the corporate sector as it made a 360 degree turn around under the able 'skipper ' Mr. Kailasapillai who gave a new meaning to finance and accounts and threw open the doors especially to young people to fit in and give of their best.

Enough has been said about him by everyone who had the fortune to be associated with him. These pages really cannot absorb all that has to be said about him. Constraints of space prevent us from singing 'hossannas' to this great man.

Read on and enjoy the book which could be the first of this kind to be brought out of an individual who excelled in the corporate sector in the Island and gives an almost microscopic look into the humble approach lifestyle of a man from Jaffna and the remarkable role he played at John Keells Holdings at that time-long before it hit the high seas!

Fahima Farisz

A man like no other
A man like no other
A man like no other





An illustrious insight into the heritage of any person is a wonderful inspiration. Viswanathar Kailasapillai who will turn eighty today is one such. A calm demeanor with peace written all over his face, Kailasapillai recalled his early days without much ado. But what is amazing is that he gave this writer the feeling that nothing was too big nor too small for him. He took everything in his stride. Often in slow measured tones he interrupted the interview and said "automatic" -- what he meant was that everything fell into place for him without much effort. He was not one of those people who shone in his early school days. Having had his primary education at Saraswathy Vidyalayam in Araly, Jaffna. He moved on to Jaffna Hindu College to complete his education and graduated from the University of Colombo with a Degree in Accounting. It was at this point of time, that an uncle of Kailasapillai introduced him to a versatile accounting firm and he took to Accountancy in a big way. It was his accounting expertise that made him reach the stars. He went to Kokuvil Hindu College for a short stint on the recommendation of a relative but came back to his old school, Jaffna Hindu College to complete his secondary education. He was a little more than average but was not an outstanding student while in school and he was never into sports.

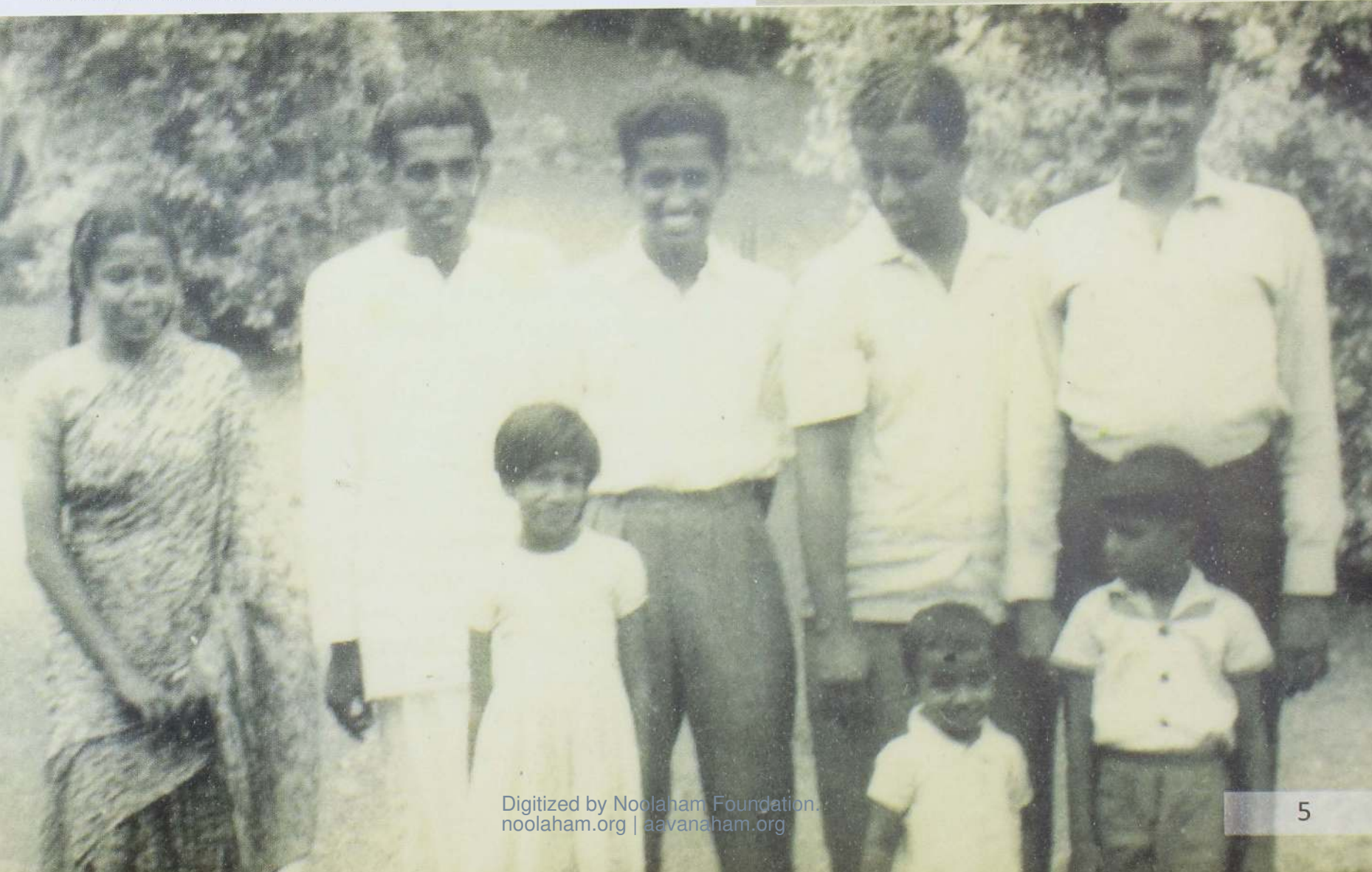
Paddy Field in Araly

This Coffee Book edition is in celebration of this colossus, marking his eightieth birthday. Unassuming to a fault in the business field, he is a beaming beacon in the financial arena. Being the Vice Chairman of John Keels Holdings (JKH) is no mean task but he took it in his stride and handled it with aplomb. A man of a few words, he is deeply religious not only being a practising Hindu and being a born vegetarian - which means no ice cream and no cake, he still exudes a childish charm that belies his true inner strength. Viswanathar Kailasapillai is a man like no other, he started at John Keels at a time when it just had one company under its wings and when he left it had spun into a massive conglomerate with more than ninety companies - all to his credit. I searched the web to get a glimpse into what this magical word "Kailasapillai" signified because we were intrigued with the name but to no avail. I don't know whether it was his name that had a magical charm that drew others to him. May be his stars were good because according to him his meteoric rise was an effortless move -- from one stage to another.



Youthful 'Kailas' with his brother (2nd from Left) and cousins Ammaiappar, Sankar & Sivakami

'Amma' Parvathiyar



A sentimental journey of
A sentimental journey of
A sentimental journey of
an only sibling

*My early childhood and
teenage memories with
my only brother*



Dr. V. Ambalavanar

My brother was three years-and-10 months-old when our father passed away. I was an infant aged eight months. Mother did not have much education. So we were dependent on other kind relatives to come up in life. This made us work really hard during these early years. Fortunately, we were under the guidance of our maternal granduncle (Appa). He had to guide his own widowed daughter, a granddaughter and two grandsons who were in the same age group. The eldest was Akka, followed by Periyannai, Sinnannai, my brother and me. All of us lived like one family guided by the widowed Appa. I was Akka's pet. Brother, Periyannai and Sinnannai were very close. They also loved me very much.

We were religious (orthodox Hindus). I was religious. Brother was not attracted so much by religion during the early years. At times he used to argue with mother about religious practises. However, he never interfered with my religious habits.

Brother concentrated on his education. From the early age he helped Appa with book keeping and tax-related work of family members. Appa who was an accountant in the government service probably taught him lots of basics.

Brother and I were often naughty and got a smacking from mother. After one incident involving a good smacking, brother told mother that he was leaving the house and walked out of the house. An elderly uncle who was there followed my brother, pacified him and brought him back. When brother came back, mother gave him a big hug with tears running down both her cheeks. Appa and Aunty advised both of us. After that incident I never saw brother annoying mother. Mother was extra kind to him. Though very naughty at times and consequently getting a good smacking from mother, I used to cling on to her. Often Akka and the others would intervene.

When Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated, there was a special prayer in his memory at our school (Jaffna Hindu College). Brother was a student in Grade 8 at that time. He wrote an appreciation about the Mahatma and the memorial event in English. The school published it in the school magazine, *the Young Hindu* with commendation. Appa was very happy about it. He read and explained the contents to mother. I asked mother whether God will also

cry for the death of the Mahatma. Mother could not answer me. Appa intervened and explained that God will not cry but grant Mocham to such a great man.

About three or four years later, I translated the poem 'John Gilpin' into my own Tamil verse and passed it on to my Tamil teacher. He got it published in *the Young Hindu* with commendation. When he took the Tamil class for my brother's grade, the teacher referred to my work and what brother wrote about the Mahatma earlier, commending both of us, saying that these are work done by children coming from a great family. "Expect big things from them in their later life."

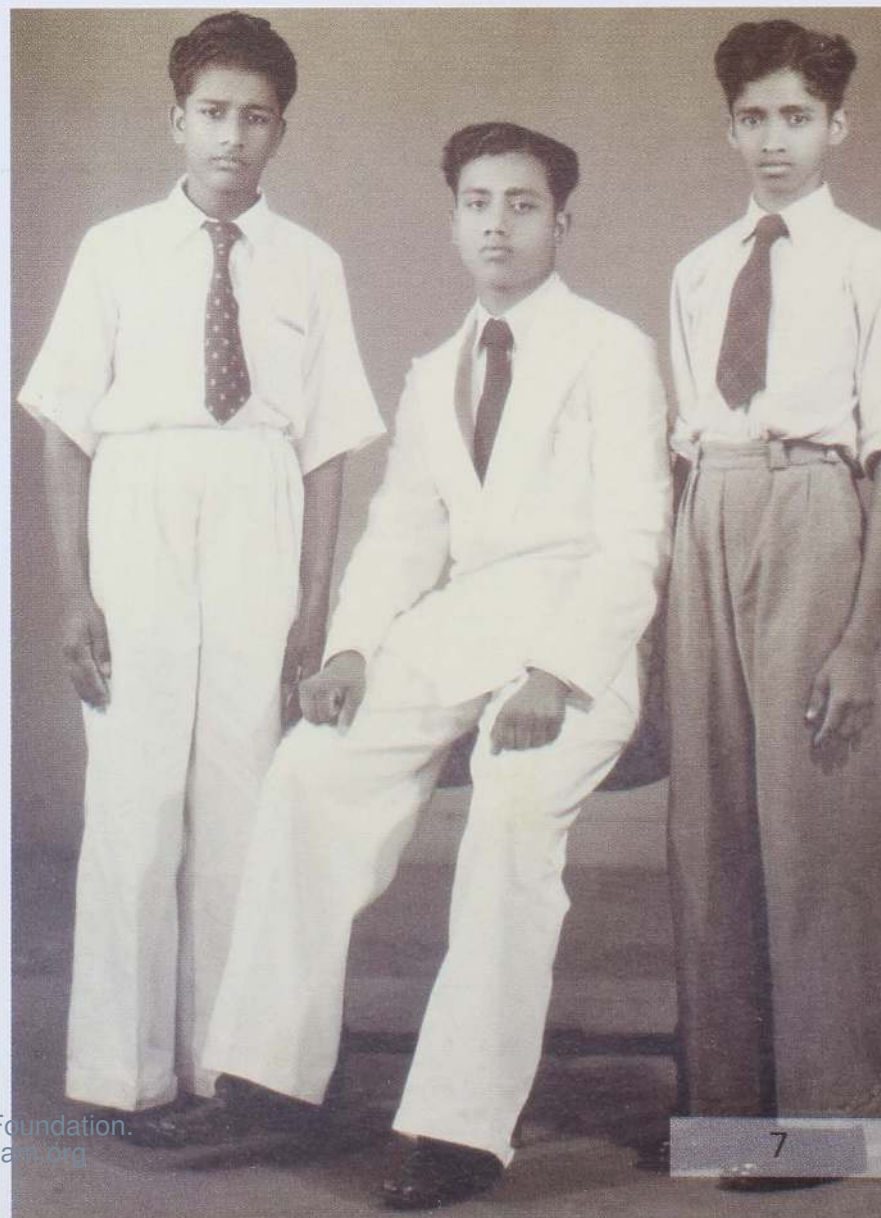
Both my brother and I were weak in Chemistry. Once the teacher wrote strongly worded remarks in my brother's tutorial exercise book. 'At this rate you will never get a pass in Chemistry in the examinations', she wrote. Appa saw this comment and gave his typical kind advice to brother to do better. In the first year at the University, brother got a 'B' for Chemistry. He proudly brought it to the notice of the school teacher. The teacher acknowledged it and told him that he merely wanted to throw a challenge and was happy that it worked.

We played soft ball cricket in a neighboring land. Once we had a match with another team. One of their batsmen hit the ball high towards the boundary. All of them were saying that it was a six. Somehow my brother who was fielding there took a stunning catch. They never tried such hits in that direction thereafter. We hardly took part in sports or games at school. Often we were there to cheer and encourage fellow students.

Brother identified the daughter (Kamala) of our maternal uncle as his life partner quite early in life. During the late teens he grew a moustache. I often heard him singing a song in Tamil. ஆசை கொள்ளும் மீசையுள்ள ஆம்பளையை பார்த்தியா... சிங்கத்தையும் வெல்லும் வீரசிங்கம் அவன்தானாங்க... I tease them with the lines in another Tamil song thus. அண்ணா ஒரு பைத்தியமா ஆயிடிச்ச அண்ணி மேலே சொக்கி சொக்கி ஓ அண்ணா சொக்கி சொக்கி....

In Akka's eldest daughter Sarasu, my sister-in-law had a close childhood relative and friend. Kamala and my brother must have been watching me closely for some time. One day my brother asked me whether I had any interest in Sarasu. That gave me an opportunity to let the cat out of the bag. So there we are with our chosen life partners.

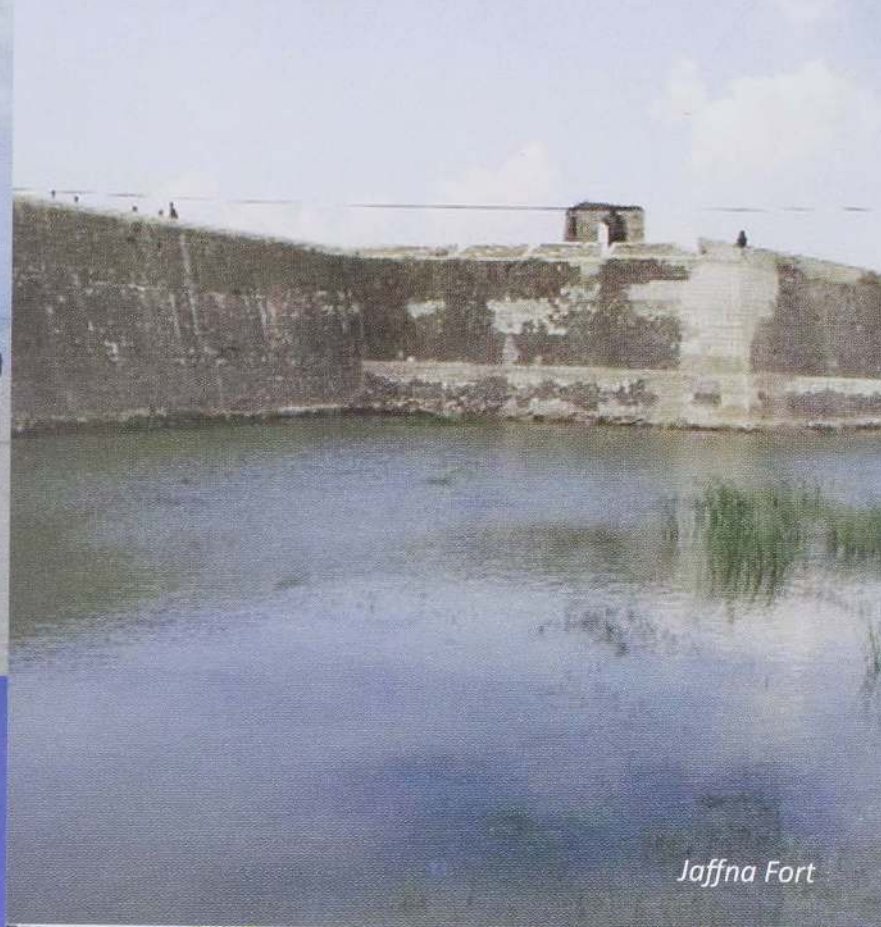
Before I end this, I wish to mention one more incident. I was at the University. At the end of the first term my brother and I were at the Colombo Fort Railway Station platform. The train to Jaffna was almost stopping at the platform. I tried to get in and get a good seat. In the rush I fell landing on my feet first. Luckily it was between two compartments. I walked along with the slowing train. Another person gave me a helping hand. I got on to the platform and then into the train. My brother must have seen me going down. He did not see me getting back into the train. He and a few concerned persons were looking out for me underneath. When I saw this, I peeped out of the window, called my brother and told him that I was safe. It took a long time for both of us to get over the shock!



From Jaffna Album...



Casuarina Beach



Jaffna Fort



Clock Towers - Jaffna



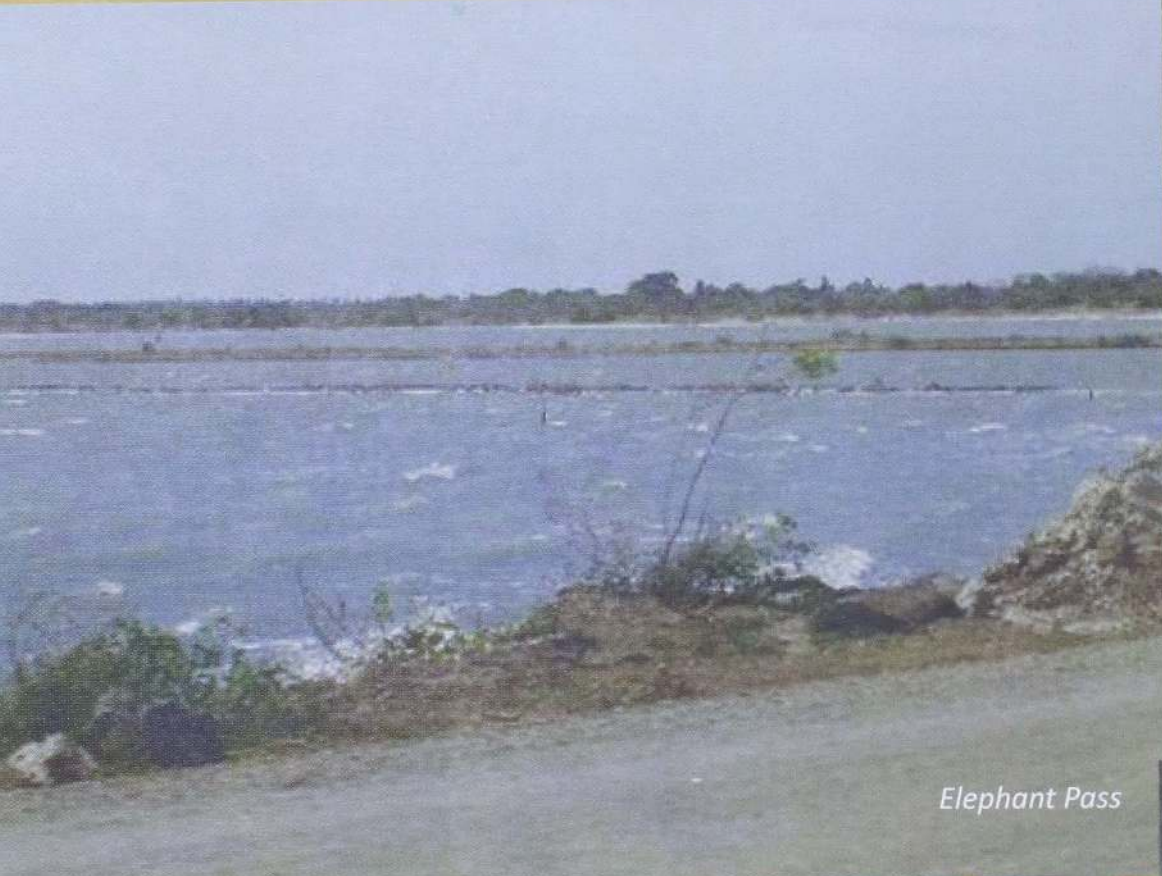
Cadjan Fence



Statute of Sangilian last King of Jaffna



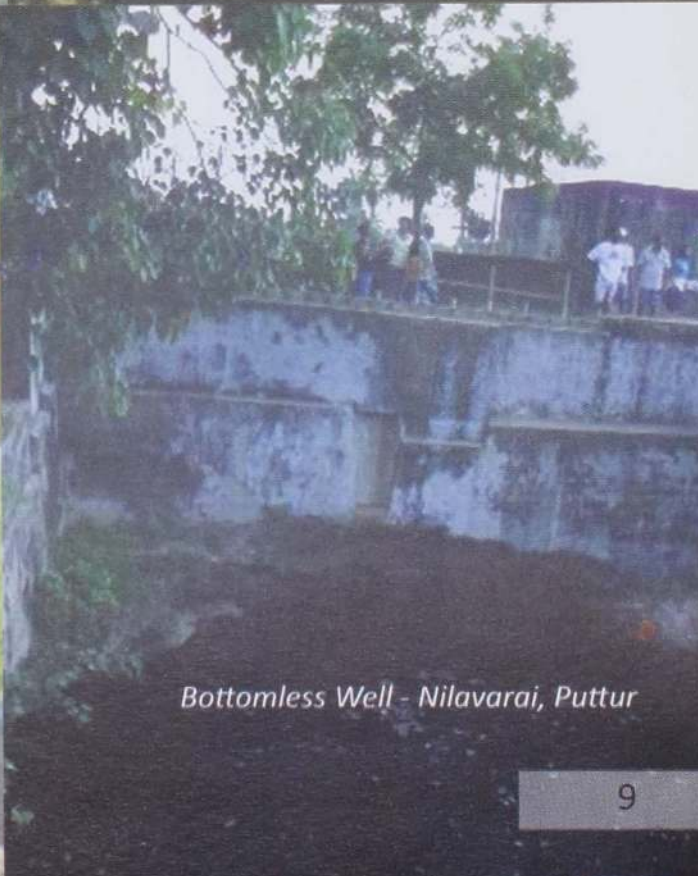
Nallur Kandaswamy Temple



Elephant Pass



Murugandiy Pillayar Temple on A9



Bottomless Well - Nilavarai, Puttur

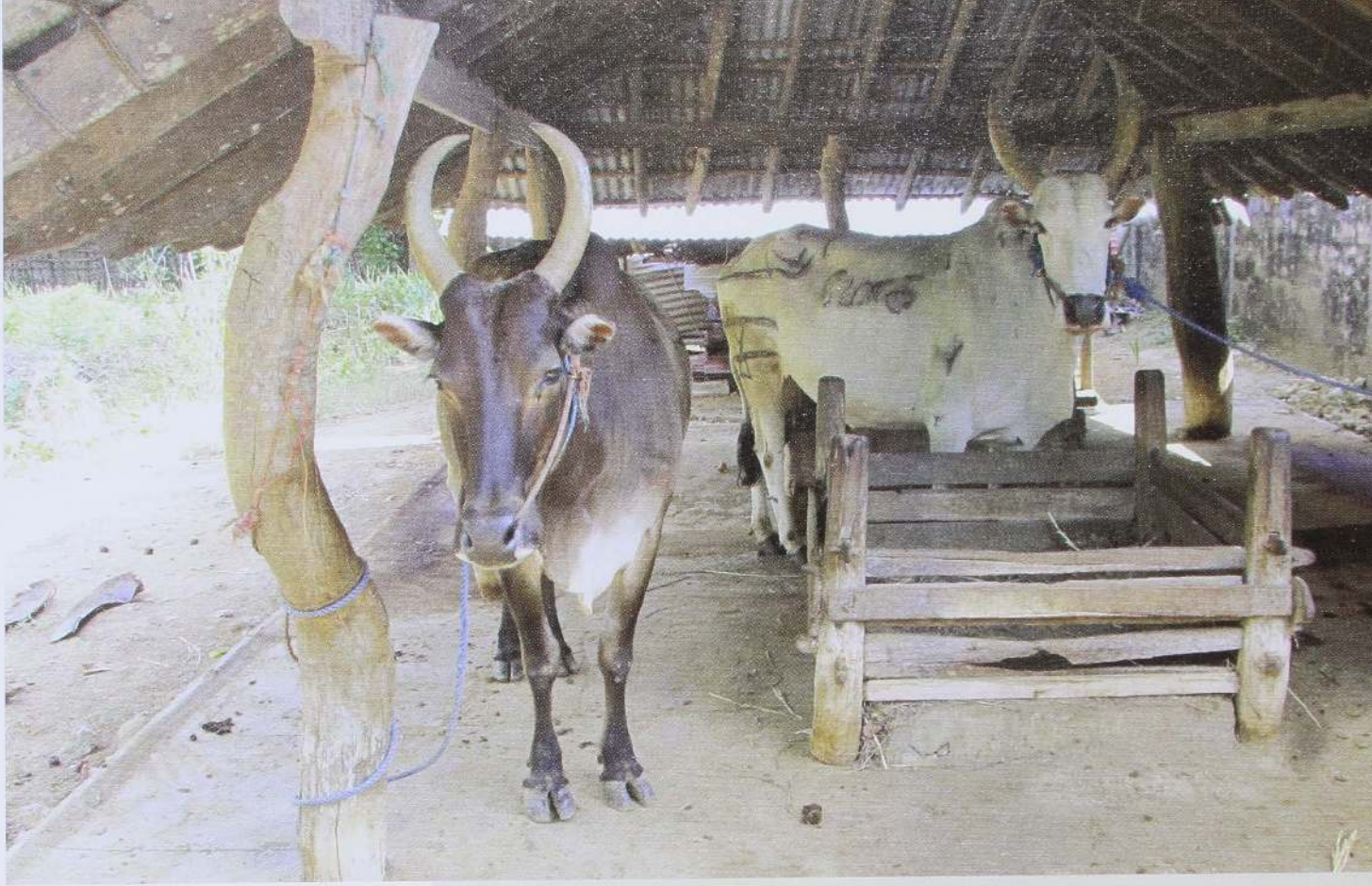
Sentiments echoed
Sentiments echoed
Sentiments echoed

“Aiyah is our Banyan tree. Our needy people are under his shade. Of course the depth of his compassion and love is immeasurable like the sea. As far as his knowledge and intelligence goes, I would refer to both these aspects as ‘Aalam’ in my mother tongue”

“These are sentiments echoed by no lesser person than Dr. Aru Thirumurugan Director of Hindu Research Centre, in Jaffna who gave a telephone interview. Dr. Thirumurugan has dedicated his life to religious and social service following in the footsteps of his mentor, the Late Sivathamilselvi Thangammah Appacutty. He chairs the Board of Management of Tellippalai Durgaiamma Kovil and also the Sivapoomi Trust. Hence Dr. Thirumurugan has become a member of the extended family of the Kailasapillais. Dr. Thirumurugan who is well informed about Jaffna can be identified as a walking encyclopaedia where matters of Jaffna are concerned. For him his visionary guru, Mr V. Kailasapillai has left an indelible mark on the life of Dr. Thirumurugan. He refers to his guru as ‘Aiyah’ (never referred to Mr Kailasapillai by name) and of course referred to Mrs Kailasapillai as Amma.



“The Aiyah family hailed from a Saiva, Jaffna traditional family who were strict vegetarians. Their ancestral home is still known as ‘Vadakku Valawu’. In the old days they travelled in bullock carts. In memory a bullock cart can still be seen parked in the compound of the Valawu- in silent tribute to the services



it rendered in the early days. The photograph of the bullock cart appears in the pages in this publication

The Kailasapillais maintained a close family relationship. They were the chiefs in their village. As a rule they married within the family, either their Machan or Machals (father’s sister’s children or mother’s brother’s children)

“They built their own temples and managed them. They were landed proprietors. In short they were like the royal families in their time.

Aiyah’s humility is incomparable. We know that he is well qualified and educated but under no circumstances would he lose his temper. He is calm and collected at all times. A trait I admire. He is a much-valued product of Jaffna Hindu College.

On the occasion when the former President of India, Shri Abdul Kalam visited our school, I, being a past pupil was really happy to see Aiyah accompanied by another old boy Kandiah Neelakandan honouring that great statesman. (For the last 20 or more years, Aiyah has been our uncrowned Leader)”



Caskets (Peddagams)

Alma mater Glorified
Alma mater Glorified
Alma mater Glorified

Having had his primary education at Araly Saraswathy Vidyalayam till the third standard Mr. Kailasapillai then moved on to Hindu College, Jaffna. When we queried as to whether he was a bright pupil in school, he gave us an enigmatic smile and said 'No, not really'. His wife Abhirani has been with him in thick and thin and said he was what one would call 'slightly above average'. "Then when did you begin to shine we asked." "I think after I left University and my uncle introduced me to a well-known accounting firm". Having served Articles at the then leading Chartered Accountancy Firm of Satchithananda, Schokman and Wijeratne, Kailasapillai was the obvious choice for the Lander Prize which is awarded to the best student who excels in the final examination for Chartered Accountants conducted by the Institute of Chartered Accountants. He had excelled in his final examinations and Kailasapillai had to be awarded the prize. "This is a very rare prize and very few people have won this prize" he elaborated. "This was the first time that I shone in my studies when I landed with the Landers' prize" Mr. Kailasapillai said with a tinge of nostalgia. "I felt elated. I was anyway steady in my work but I did not think that I will be awarded the prize".

Kailas returns to Jaffna Hindu as the Honoured Chief Guest at a Prize Giving





Araly Saraswathy Vidyalayam



Jaffna Hindu College



Gna Vairavar Temple at Jaffna Hindu college



Navalar Statue at JHC



New Entrance of JHC

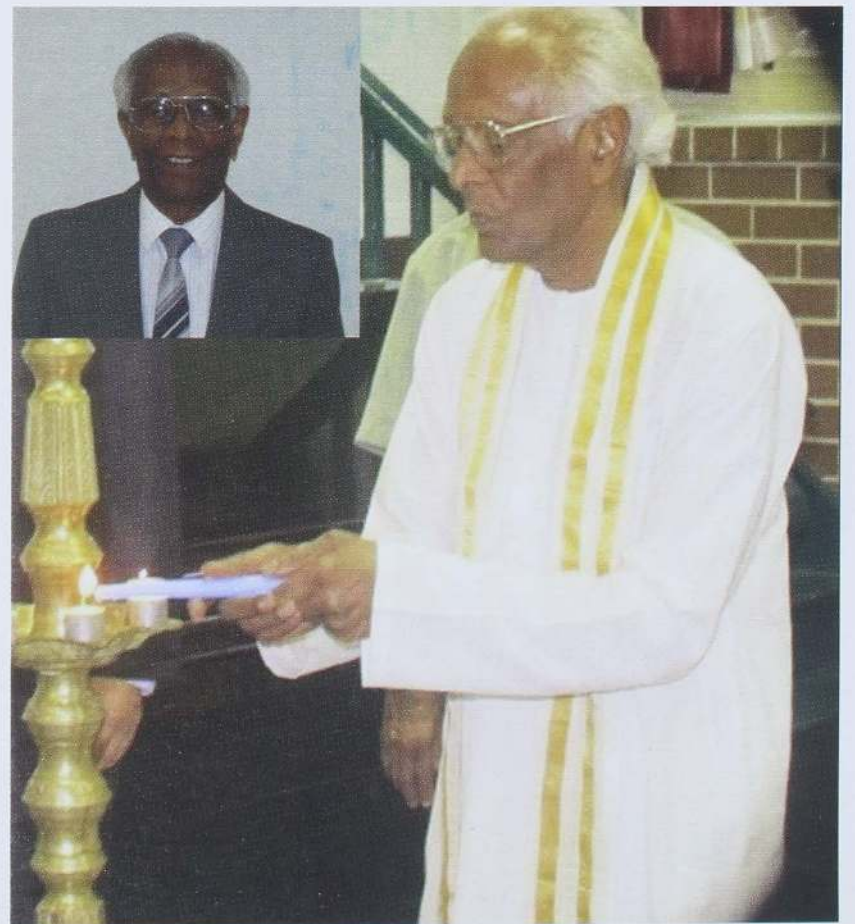
Kailas was a Phenomenon
Kailas was a Phenomenon
Kailas was a Phenomenon

Mr Kailasapillai began at the bottom of the ladder and rose in a gradual process to the helm in the accountancy profession. This was by sheer dint of hard work, he strove in his own way to reach the stars. His non compromising commitment to the high ideals of his profession was the diamond in his armoury.

Being a member of the Council of Examiners of the Institute, he has held various posts in the Institute of Chartered Accountants culminating as its Vice President. It is indeed a wonder that he excelled in his field of study considering the fact that he lost his mother when he was just three-years-old and then his father was with him and his younger brother who was only eightmonths but his father passed away when he was seventeen years. Pretty much alone, he and his brother were brought up by their grandfather who was the Chief Accountant at the Customs Department. He was Arunachalam Sellappah who spared no pains to educate both boys and showered them with love and affection to make up for the loss of both parents.

It is heartening when a friend, colleague or associate admires the work of another. In this short piece Mr Samy Pasupati one-time colleague and then friend has encapsulated the many attributes that make up the man known as 'Kailas' to his many endearing friends. Mr. Samy Pasupathi who retired as Senior partner of Coopers Lybrand, Satchithananda Pasupathi & Co., and emigrated to Australia Said

"It is indeed a great pleasure to me to have been able to count Kailas, as he is affectionately known to all his friends, as a very dear friend of almost sixty years. I first came to know Kailas at Satchi's, then known as Satchithananda Schokman Wijeyeratne & Co, a premier firm of accountants. It was immediately apparent that here was a man, very mature for his age, who cared very much for others- a quality he has demonstrated in many ways to this day.



Samy Pasupati

“Kailas was a brilliant student and passed out as a Chartered Accountant with flying colours. He was respected by his peers, looked up to and admired by his juniors who always knew that he was there to guide them, with the partners being sure that he could be depended on to do a perfect job on any assignment. One of his many major achievements was at John Keells. The Land Reform which adversely affected the country also placed the flourishing agency houses in a very precarious position. It was at this juncture we all admired the managerial skills of Kailas who along with his Chairman, Ken Balendra and supported by a selected team, turned John Keells around, a phenomenal and brilliant achievement indeed.

“I have had occasion to compliment some of the youngsters in the team and they would always say it was all because of the training and guidance they received from Ken or Kailas.

“Kailas, notwithstanding his heavy managerial commitment at John Keells, surprisingly found the time to involve himself in almost every aspect of service, the community, religious affairs, educational levels - schools, University and Post Graduate, orphanages, homes for elders and even the Institute of Chartered Accountants where he held the office, among others, that of Vice President; a proud record indeed!

Induction of Viswanathar Kailasapillai to the Hall of Fame 2012

CITATION

Viswanathar Kailasapillai projected a larger than life figure in the business world. After a protracted period of service in the business sector, he retired in 1996 as the Deputy Chairman and Group Finance Director of John Keells Holdings Ltd. His contribution to the John Keells Group has been remarkable. He played a key role in the Planning and Policy formulation of the group including Strategic and Tax Planning.

Kailasapillai was the Vice President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka in 1977. He has served the institute as a member of the languages committee and played an active role in compiling Tamil glossaries in accounting. He served on both Council of the Universities of Kelaniya and Post Graduate Institute of Management of the Sri Jayawardenapura University. His appointment as the Chairman of the Colombo Stock Exchange bore testimony to the esteemed position he enjoyed in the business sector. In 1989, he played a key role in the preparation of “A Strategy for Industrialisation in Sri Lanka” at the request of the Minister of Industries. In particular the ideas about the concept of Venture Capital and Unit Trusts originated in his fertile mind and were included in the strategy and these concepts have gained traction in the business world.

His call to duty permeated all aspects of his life and even after his retirement there is no deceleration of his tempo. Advancing age has not mellowed him. He continues to support a number of institutions involved in religious activities and social welfare. The positions he holds include:

- President, All Ceylon Hindu Congress (Apex Body of Hindu Temples and Associations)
- Chairman, Board of Trustees of Thirukesheswaram Temple Restoration Society in the Mannar District.
- Chairman, Manitha Neyam Trust (Love for Humanity) - a humanitarian agency
- Past Chairman, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies of Sri Lanka

He supports these institutions with generosity and munificence and in making references to his rich contribution, it cannot be helped but breaking into superlatives. Somewhat conservative, he never wanted to be much of a headline grabber and yet earned a reputation for wise counseling and much lauded decision making. Even in retirement he ensures that his ideas and beliefs do not become out of sync with the current and contemporary needs. His fixation with public spiritedness and public interest continues to remain undiminished.

Sir, the Members of CA Sri Lanka express their gratitude and admiration for the invaluable contribution you have made for the profession in particular and the society in general.

The Council of CA Sri Lanka is honoured to induct Viswanathar Kailasapillai to the CA Sri Lanka Hall of Fame 2012.

Institute of Chartered Accountants at Malalasekera Mw



"It is therefore not surprising that the Chartered Institute in the second year of the inauguration of the Hall of Fame, inducted Kailas into the Hall expressing their 'gratitude and admiration' made to the Institute and Society May God Bless Kailas continued good health and happiness."



Mr. Chandra Jayaratne.

Mr. Chandra Jayaratne who was Managing Director of Ceylon Tobacco Co. PLC and Eagle Insurance PLC and also Chairman of Ceylon Chamber of Commerce says:

"I came to know Mr. Kailasapillai when I was a student at the Institute of Chartered Accountants. As a lecturer he played an active role at the institute. I associated closely with him when he was in the Council of Chartered Accountants.

"For us he was a highly respected benchmark accountant. The way he spoke, his conduct more importantly his values and judgment along with his response to situations reflected his overall personality.

"He is soft spoken, thoughtful and tactful when he handles issues. He has a broad outlook which made him to think clearly and come out with precise decisions over whatever situation he handled.

"He is one person whom I respected as being an iconic professional. I first worked with him at the Colombo Commercial Company and later on he moved over to John Keells. He had the ability to take just a minute to understand the environment in which companies functioned. The companies at that time were subjected to the commission against estate agencies. During this time agency houses were collapsing. However, it was at this point one that changes began to take place at John Keells.

"Mr. Ken Balendra and Mr.V.Kailasapillai played a tremendous role in strengthening John Keells.

"My overall assessment is that Kailas is a visionary the private sector had. He took steps which were forward thinking. Instead of confining himself to one segment or a particular community, Kailasapillai had a broad outlook in handling matters.

"As a corporate director he carried himself in a dignified manner. He had an uncanny ability to see and propagate growth sectors. Though he was in the back ground and less public than his Chairman Ken Balendra, Kailas remained the real strength behind Ken in the stability of John Keells.

"In the later years it was his thinking as a 'man from Jaffna' he saw the value of real estate more than others. He was a clever tax manager and he dealt with tax issues in the best interests of the company.

“Mr.Kailasapillai was a very good team builder. He created a strong finance team.Three people I would mention are, Edirisinghe, Jagath Fernando and Anushya Coomaraswamy who were groomed by him. Anusyha succeeded him at John Keells.

“The finance team built by Kailas was strong and its role was noteworthy in the stability of John Keells. Kailas was the brain behind several strategic decisions specially on capitalizing on tax opportunities, free hold and land acquisition.

“I would say he was one of those great achievers who remained a gentleman to the core; very principled and his integrity was never questioned or can never be questioned.

On one occasion an insurance deal collapsed a few days after we agreed to it. However, we parted in good spirits as it was a better deal than we agreed upon earlier. He was a gentleman and he realized that the other deal was better than ours. Therefore, everything happened with good understanding.

“Even after retirement, the leadership he gave to the All Ceylon Hindu Congress was remarkable. I remember the day he and Mr Neelakandan met me (in1995) when I was the Managing Director of CTC Eagle Insurance Co. Ltd (as it was then known) and negotiated to give a part of ACHC Building to my company on lease” and obtained a substantial advance to complete the building

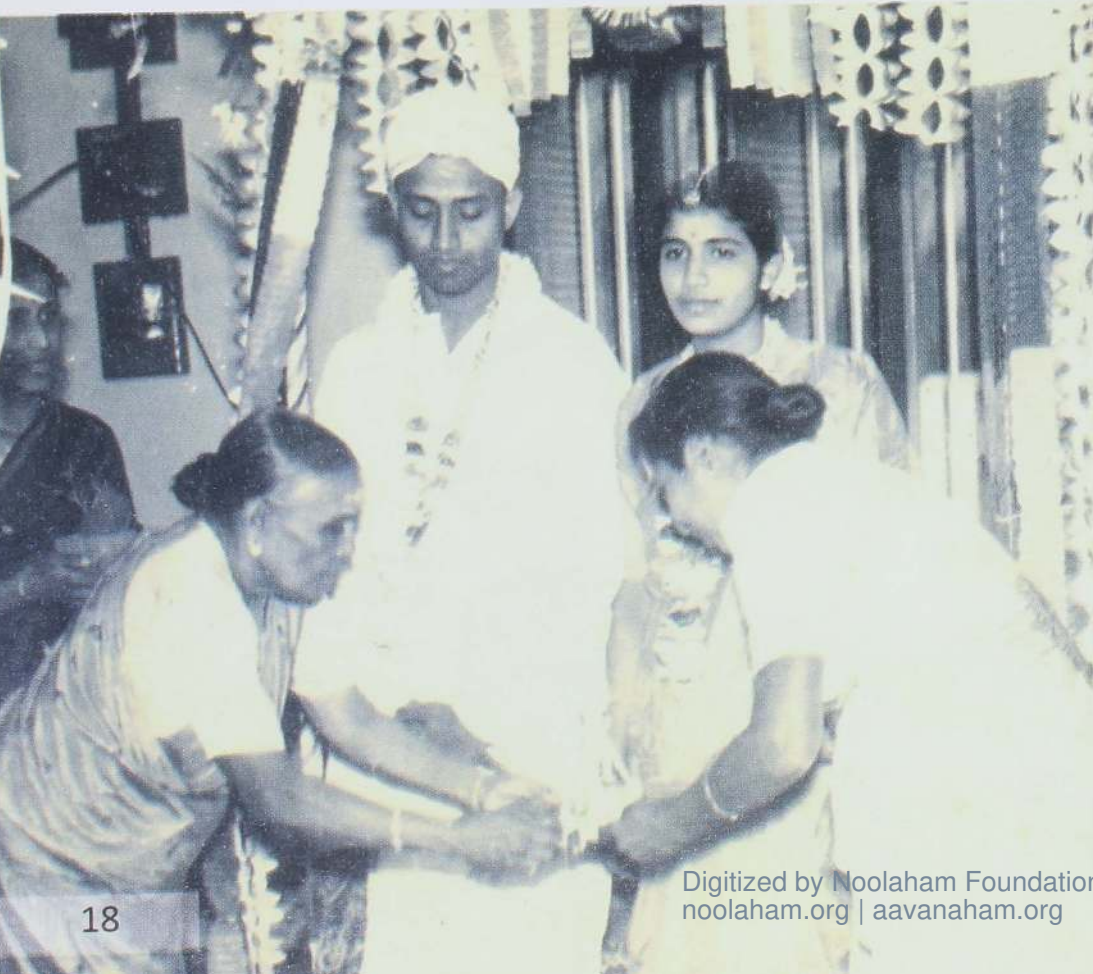
“After the tsunami he ably assisted through the **All Ceylon Hindu Congress** those who were affected. Even after the civil strife came to an end in the North, Kailasapillai on behalf of the Hindu Congress played an important role in providing assistance in the rehabilitation process of the LTTE cadres.”

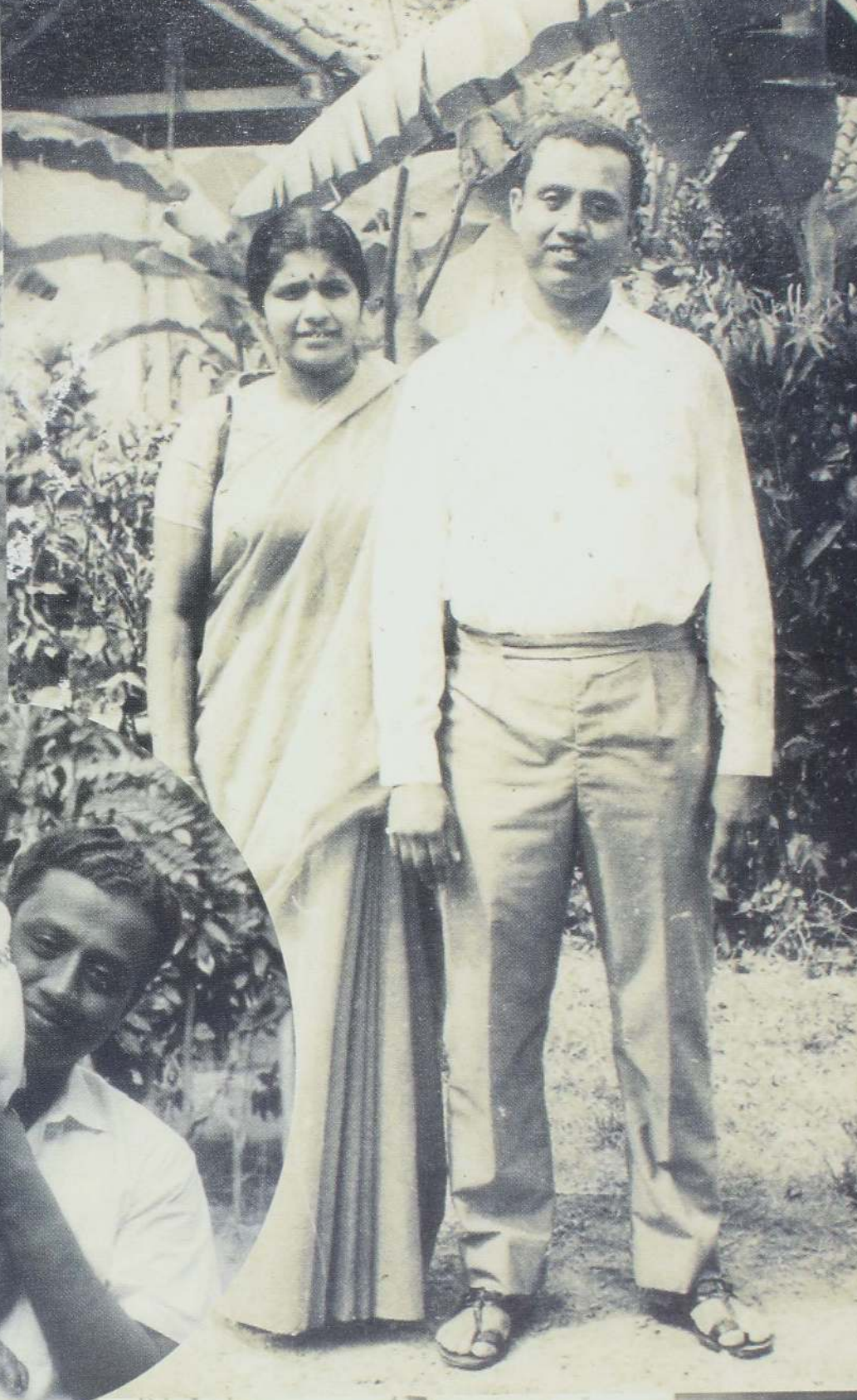


I was over the Moon...
I was over the Moon...
I was over the Moon...

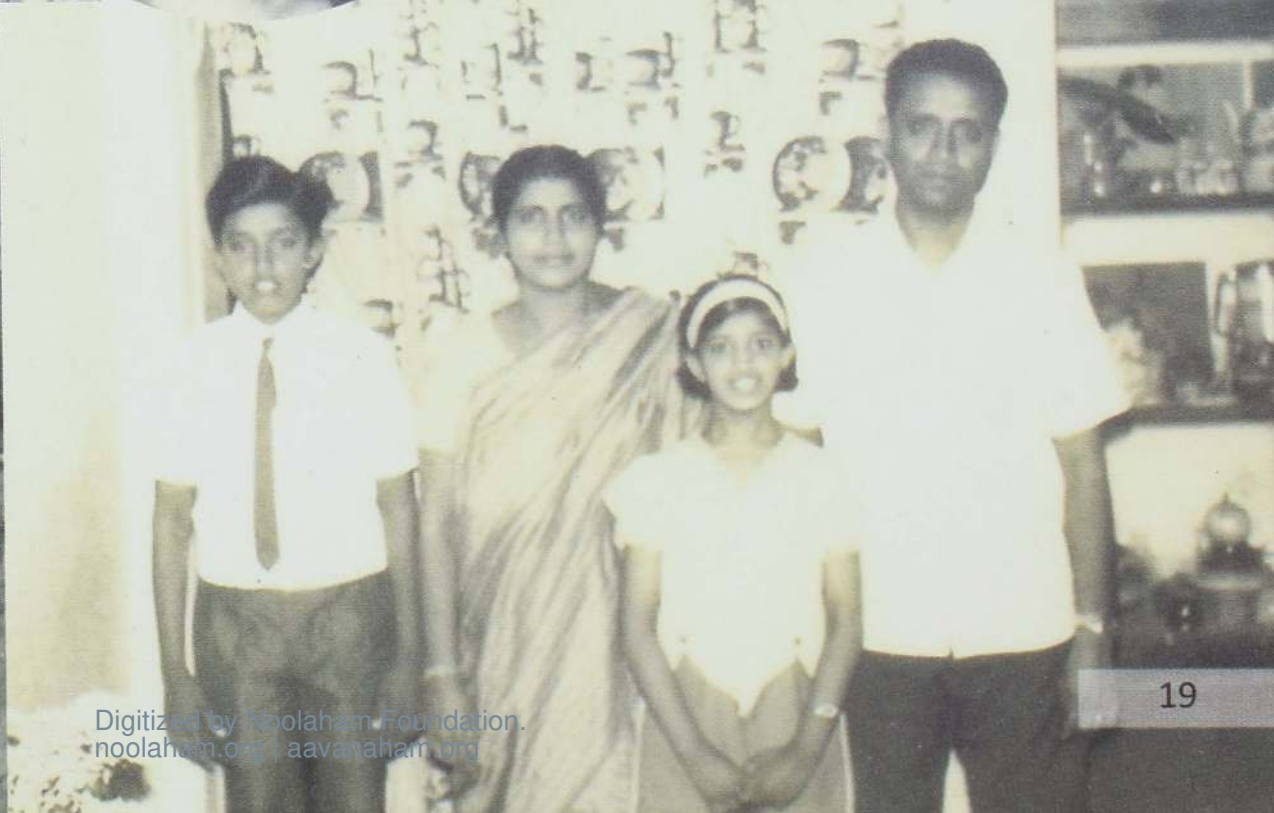
Mr. V. Kailasappillai married his own cousin, Abhirami who is nine years his junior who has been the lamp of his life. We are making this statement after hearing what Mr Kailasapillai had to say about her while we were conversing with him. 'Don't listen too much to her because she is always premises me" but added "She is the go-getter. Because I have achieved what I have achieved solely because of her". What more would a wife want to hear from a husband who has reached the pinnacle of his career. He married her in 1960 and his son, Aravindhan, an Information Technology Engineer based in America was born a year later. Their daughter, Arunthathi, who is a qualified Accountant followed in her father's footsteps but does not practise as an accountant but is assesting in working for her husband in business affairs. Talking of the birth of his children, when we asked him "were you elated when your children were born?" "Yes of course when my children were born I was over the moon" was his reaction. Arunthathi is married to Dr. Sivakumar Selliah.

Three scens at the Wedding of Mr. & Mrs. Kailasapillai in 1960





Mr. & Mrs. Kailasapillai with their children, Sister-in-law Malar and their niece. In other pictures young couple and their Children





Malar, Arunthathi, Shiva, Kailas, Abhirami, Aravindhan

A symphony of a son
A symphony of a son
A symphony of a son



Youthful Kamala and Kailas



Parents with their Baby Son

Aravinthan is a chip of the old block. K. Aravinthan is the only son of Mr. V. Kailasapillai and is a Systems person being in the IT field. His initial education was at Hindu College Colombo from where he graduated to Royal College, Colombo 7 and then went on to do a Degree in Electrical Engineering at the Moratuwa University but was unable to pursue his higher education in Sri Lanka due to the 1983 pogrom. He however, successfully completed his Degree in the UK. He did his Masters in Columbia University, New York.

Engineering must have been in Aravinthan's genes because right from his infant days he was fascinated with his father driving the family car. "Appa car" was how he referred to his father's car and immensely enjoyed going on driving with his father Mr Kailasapillai. He was just a tot and was always trying to be of assistance to his father, Aravinthan would run to his father with his pair of socks whenever Mr. Kailasapillai got ready for work.



Aravinthan driving 'Appa Car'

As time went by Aravinthan's estimation of his father rose to the skies when due to unforeseen circumstances there was a shortage of a commerce teacher at Hindu College, Mr. Kailasapillai graciously took on the responsibility to fit in the slot and would go early morning to Hindu College and do a commerce class. Aravinthan's foray into Accounting and Management was initiated after his father's teaching stint and left a lasting impression on the young lad's mind. "I looked upto him as a teacher and admired his ability to teach and impress on us whatever he had to say".

A father's love is, of course, an important element in a young man's life. Many boys love to do all the things their fathers did. Think about an idealistic picture of a father and son playing; or a son handing a bat or ball over to his father to play a game of cricket under the hood of a car. No matter what the father is doing you can be certain that the son will want to do it too. Young men learn what it means to be a man from the example of their fathers. This is not a role to be taken lightly. Many young men will follow in their father's career paths because they are in awe of the man that raised them to be what they are. This can be one of the most exciting moments of a father's life but strangely in Aravinthan's case he never followed his father's career path but saying that does not mean that he did not want to emulate his father in every way because Mr Kailasapillai led by example and let his children follow him.

Aravinthan is a conversationalist in his own inimitable style and gave us an insight into his father's life." My father was extremely religious and was deeply into religious activities and he drew me into the spiritual realm". In Aravinthan's youthful exuberance he denied the existence of God. It was much later that god consciousness was aroused in Aravinthan. 'Watching my father do things and seeing things happening around enlightened me no end. My father opened my light and the love for humanity ". By the way Mr Kailasapillai is the Chairman of the Manitha Neyam (Love for humanity) Trust which has a branch in the US. Following in his father's footsteps, Aravinthan runs the Trust in the US. "The objective is to help needy Sri Lankans," when the occasion demands the Americans too have been helped out by the trust. When Hurricane Katrina devastated parts of the US, the Manitha Neyam Trust rose to the occasion.



Parents and children with Malar



Bridegroom Aravinthan after receiving blessing from his father



Aravinthan and Yaso participating in prayer led by Swami Shantananda Saraswathy



Aravinthan and Yaso in their wedding ceremony

In more ways than one, Aravinthan tries hard to emulate his father, especially in his ways of giving and approach to mankind as a whole.

"As I grew older my perception of my father changed. From being the playful and fun loving person it changed to one of awe and respect. He is a saintly figure. He has done his part. It is upto us to carry on his wonderful legacy - both in the religious firmament as well as in the acts of charity. A serene and subdued Aravinthan is convinced that his father has left a lasting legacy of how to live a peaceful and enlightened life." He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it'

'I can't match him on the Corporate side. He is a legend'.

When Aravinthan and Arunthathi were small children, it was Aravinthan who used to rile and bully his little sister as boys are wont to do, thus earning the wrath of his father.

"When I fight with my sister and irritate her, my father reprimands me".

Mr Kailasapillai was overwhelmed with the birth of his children. Aravinthan recalls nostalgically that he heard that when he was born in Jaffna, his father took the mail train to Jaffna and came immediately to see his son. Living upto his father's expectations Aravinthan is also a teetotaler, non smoker and is an out and out vegetarian. Following the trek shown by his father, Aravinthan has no problem following the strict regimen set out by him, which is a way of life for Mr Kailasapillai.

The symphony does not end here...

Yasodara the petite beauty, one and only daughter-in-law of the legend who must have been a secret admirer of her father-in-law who was a quiet enigmatic personality. An exponent of Bharatha Natyam, she migrated to the US and obtained a Degree in Information Technology.

To Mr Kailasapillai, Yasodara must have meant more than a daughter, because of her marriage to his only son. The daughter-in-law - father-in-law relationship is a fine one, stretching through the miles. Not being a man of many words, Mr Kailasapillai would have in no small measure imbued his affection to his daughter-in-law and she in turn would have responded.

Many are the times that Mr Kailasapillai has gone to the US and enjoyed Yasodara's hospitality, where he would have impressed upon his daughter-in-law his simple yet endearing qualities which in her mind must be the personification of love and mutual respect.



Aravinthan's Wedding



Kailas with his wife and son, daughter-in-law and first two grand children at his office desk



Aravinthan with his bride, parents, sister and Aunt Malar



Three Generations at Kailas's residence 'Samarpanam' in Thiruketheeswaram

By the way, Yasodara being a classmate of Arunthathi, his daughter has made ties even closer and Yasodara known as Yaso to close family must have had an immense impact on Mr Kailasapillai, thus drawing her more and more into the family and strengthening family ties and ensuring that all is well in the close knit family.

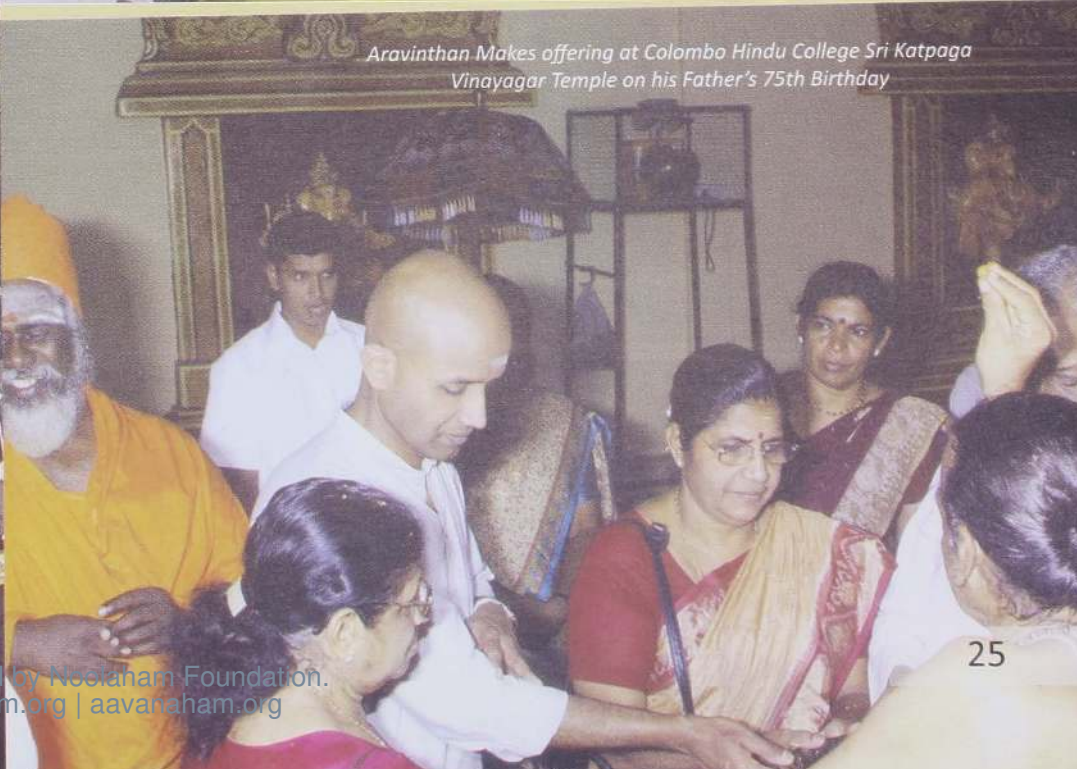
Aravinthan at a Book release in Colombo - receiving a special copy from Sivasri Eswara Kurukkal



Grand father and grand son relaxed after worshipping at Thiruketheeswaram



Aravinthan Lighting the Lamp at a function



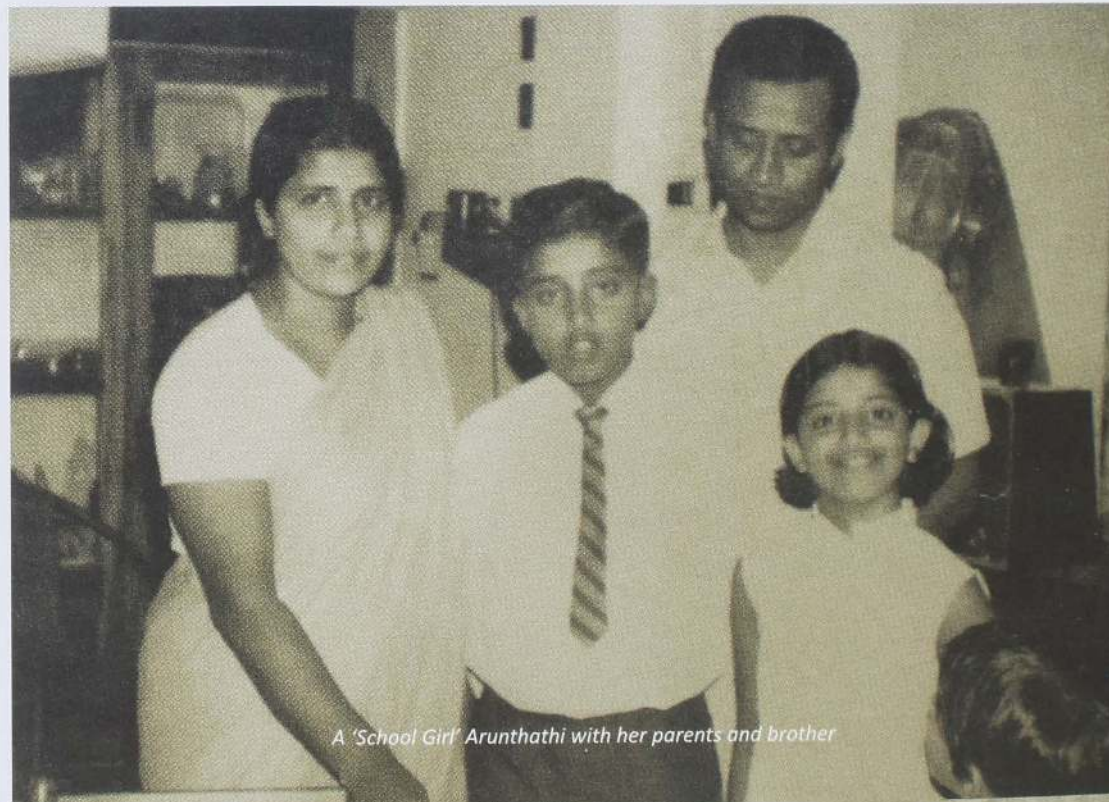
Aravinthan Makes offering at Colombo Hindu College Sri Katpaga Vinayagar Temple on his Father's 75th Birthday

Daddy's little girl!
Daddy's little girl!
Daddy's little girl!

She is daddy's little girl out and out...Arunthathi Selliah only daughter of V. Kailasapillai has the ideal feminine characteristics as would have been inculcated in her by her parents. Arunthathi has a broad perspective of life. Her quiet demeanour underlies this fact as her aesthetic senses have reached out to broader horizons. She enjoys western music in addition to her exposure to Indian classical music and Carnatic music. Arunthathi's love for beautiful Tamil classics was endorsed when she said "I always enjoy Tamil songs".

Arunthathi studied initially at St Lawrence's Convent Wellawatte and then moved on for her Advanced Levels to Ladies College. While in school she must have been studious. Funnily enough Arunthathi towed her father's line and took to accountancy. She has ended up being an accountant although now she is not formally employed. Arunthathi gladly helps out her husband, Dr Siva Selliah who sits on a number of corporate boards

Arunthathi must surely have been the apple of her father's eye because for the world of her she just could not recall a single occasion



A 'School Girl' Arunthathi with her parents and brother



Arunthathi with her parents and Aunt

where she was pulled up by her father. She is full of her father and the admiration that exudes for him is unmistakable. The patience he imparted by his demeanour spread like wild fire. Arunthathi also to a very great extent has this trait with her calm and soft spoken approach.

True to Rabindranath Tagore's epiphany on children in his timeless epic, Gitanjali, Arunthathi stands tall being her father's loving daughter.



Arunthathi with her parents and Aunt

"On the seashore of endless worlds children meet.

The infinite sky is motionless overhead and the restless water is boisterous. On the seashore of endless worlds the children meet with shouts and dances.

They build their houses with sand, and they play with empty shells. With withered leaves they weave their boats and smilingly float them on the vast deep. Children have their play on the seashore of worlds.

They know not how to swim, they know not how to cast nets. Pearl-fishers dive for pearls, merchants sail in their ships, while children gather pebbles and scatter them again. They seek not for hidden treasures, they know not how to cast nets.

The sea surges up with laughter, and pale gleams the smile of the sea-beach. Death-dealing waves sing meaningless ballads to the children, even like a mother while rocking her baby's cradle. The sea plays with children, and pale gleams the smile of the sea-beach.

On the seashore of endless worlds children meet. Tempest roams in the pathless sky, ships are wrecked in the trackless water, death is abroad and children play. On the seashore of endless worlds is the great meeting of children."

- Rabindranath Tagore, Gitanjali

Arunthathi's life with her father would have been one of awe because Mr Kailasapillai as always exudes the very essence of a loving father. She oft repeated the words "He never scolded me or pulled me up". It could be that

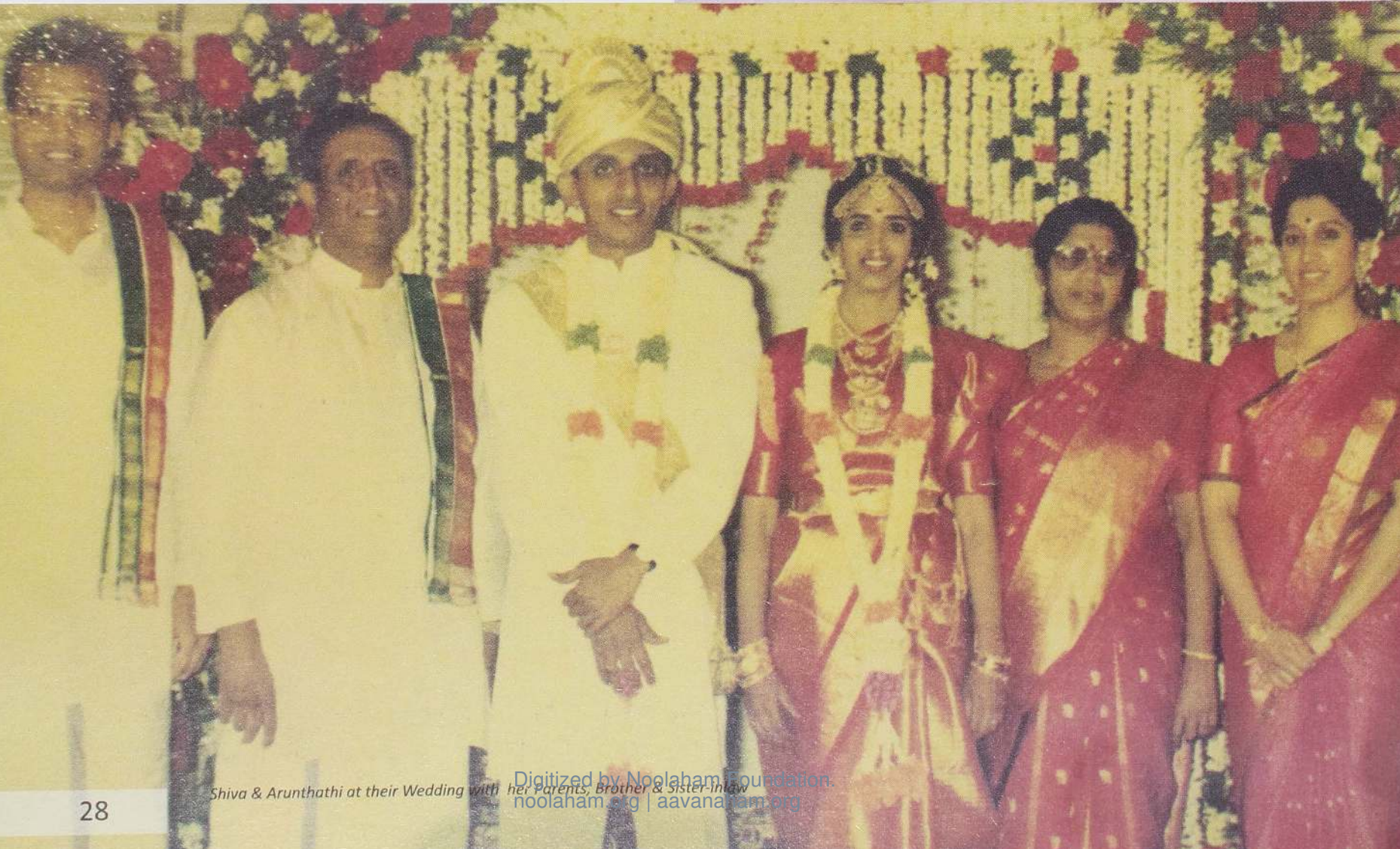
Arunthathi was an obedient child and there must have been no reason to ever castigate her but on deeper analysis it meant much more than that. It is the love that exuded from the heart of her father which she unconsciously sensed that kept Arunthathi in check not wanting to be pulled up by him on any occasion for any reason whatever.

Arunthathi sounded like her father was a god-like figure to her and all he did was accept her many foibles and fun loving actions. Arunthathi was quick to add, "He always favoured me". She was comparing herself to her brother. When there was sibling rivalry between her and her brother Aravinthan, Mr. Kailasapillai always took the side of his daughter and that was a great comfort to her in her younger days.

"My father is a religious and charitable person". This sense of religiosity and charity is practised by Arunthathi. She directly attributed this trait to her father. On occasions when Arunthathi shone in any activity, Mr Kailasapillai did not overly show his emotion, "he was happy but did not show." We as children were shown the value of money and were made aware of the lesser fortunate folk. Not everything was given to us although there was ample to go around. Till today I value this",

Mr. Kailasapillai has truly left his imprint as a father on the sands of time

Arunthathi celebrates her Birthday with her Parents and Husband



Shiva & Arunthathi at their Wedding with her Parents, Brother & Sister-in-law

A son-in-law's saga
A son-in-law's saga
A son-in-law's saga
he is a colossus

The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
And there was nothing more to add,
He knew his masterpiece was complete,
And He called it

– father-in-law

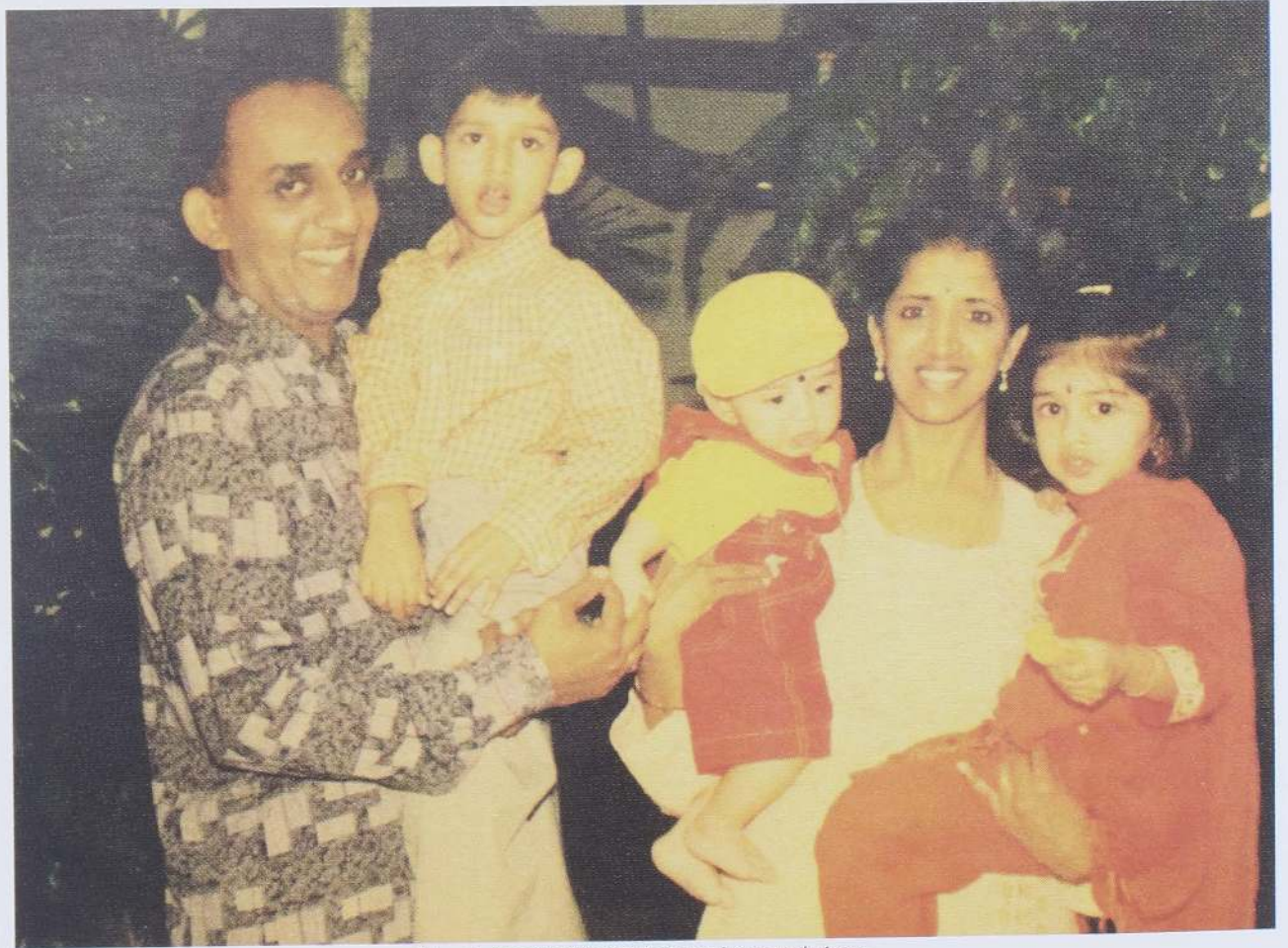


Mr. Kailasapillai's only son-in-law, Dr Siva Selliah in no uncertain terms endorsed the above quoted words, when he said "My father-in-law was a force to reckon with. His calm, collected and resolute outlook enabled him to overcome any issue. Mr. Kailasapillai has truly stood the test of time..."

Married for over twenty years to Arunthathi, only daughter of Mr. Kailasapillai, Dr Siva Selliah has an insight into the life and times of Mr Kailasapillai. He was aware of his father-in-law's financial prowess even before he married Arunthathi. My father-in-law is a calm and collected person. Nothing ruffles him. He is a keen listener and gives ear to any situation after which a solution is quick to come.

A very positive person, he would encourage anyone to proceed in whatever path he is pursuing. I worked with him in different areas and this endearing quality always was manifest. His demeanour was never ruffled – a characteristic not found in many people. He would never discourage a person and maintained a positive outlook. I looked up to him in any issue. My wife also embodies this characteristic. She never gets ruffled and remains calm...My father-in-law is easy going. He has the capacity to read people and is quick to judge people and even any situation. This comes with the vast experience, moving with various categories of people.

Dr, Siva Selliah is a Royalist and had his primary and secondary education at Royal College. He is truly a father-in-law's son-in-law, unconsciously following his father-in-law in a similar line of work. It is indeed a strange quirk of co-incidence that it should be so. Dr Siva Selliah nurtured a desire for the Corporate Sector right from his school days but turned out being a medical doctor to fulfill his mother's dream.



Shiva & Arunthathi with their nephews and nieces

Once I passed out as a doctor and also got another degree, I had satisfied my mother and then took to my passion –the Corporate Sector.

"We are a close-knit family and initially my father-in-law gave me all the support and guidance." Dr Siva Selliah has excelled in his field and sits on many Corporate Boards in various capacities.

Sentiments of

A beloved grandfather *A beloved grandfather* *A beloved grandfather*

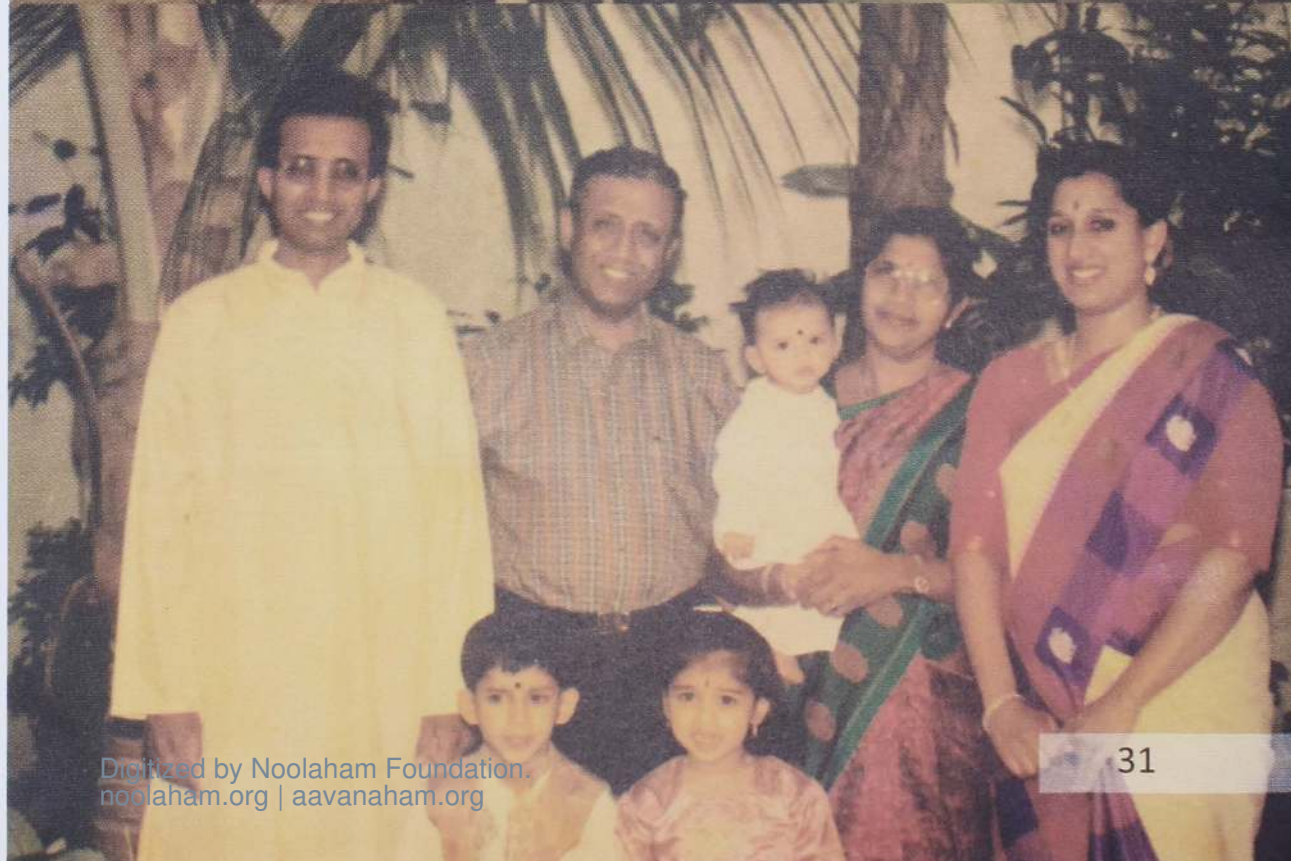
Two more shots from family album

“Grandchildren are the dots that connect the lines from generation to generation.” - Lois Wyse

The grandchildren of Mr. Kailasapillai bear ample testimony to this quote.

Mr. Kailasapillai's son Aravinthan and his wife Yasodara are blessed with three lovely children, one daughter and two sons. They are residents in the US. However, they have not lost touch with the motherland of their parents and are in close touch with their grandparents. They gave a phone interview and spoke of the endearing love Mr. Kailasapillai had towards them.

Suhasini who is eighteen-years-old and is the embodiment of womanhood, is in the centre, having an older brother and a younger brother. She was full of admiration for her grandfather who they see at least once a year. Suhasini is on the verge of entering College and will pursue a Neuro Science Degree, in stark contrast to her grandfather who is a Maths genius.



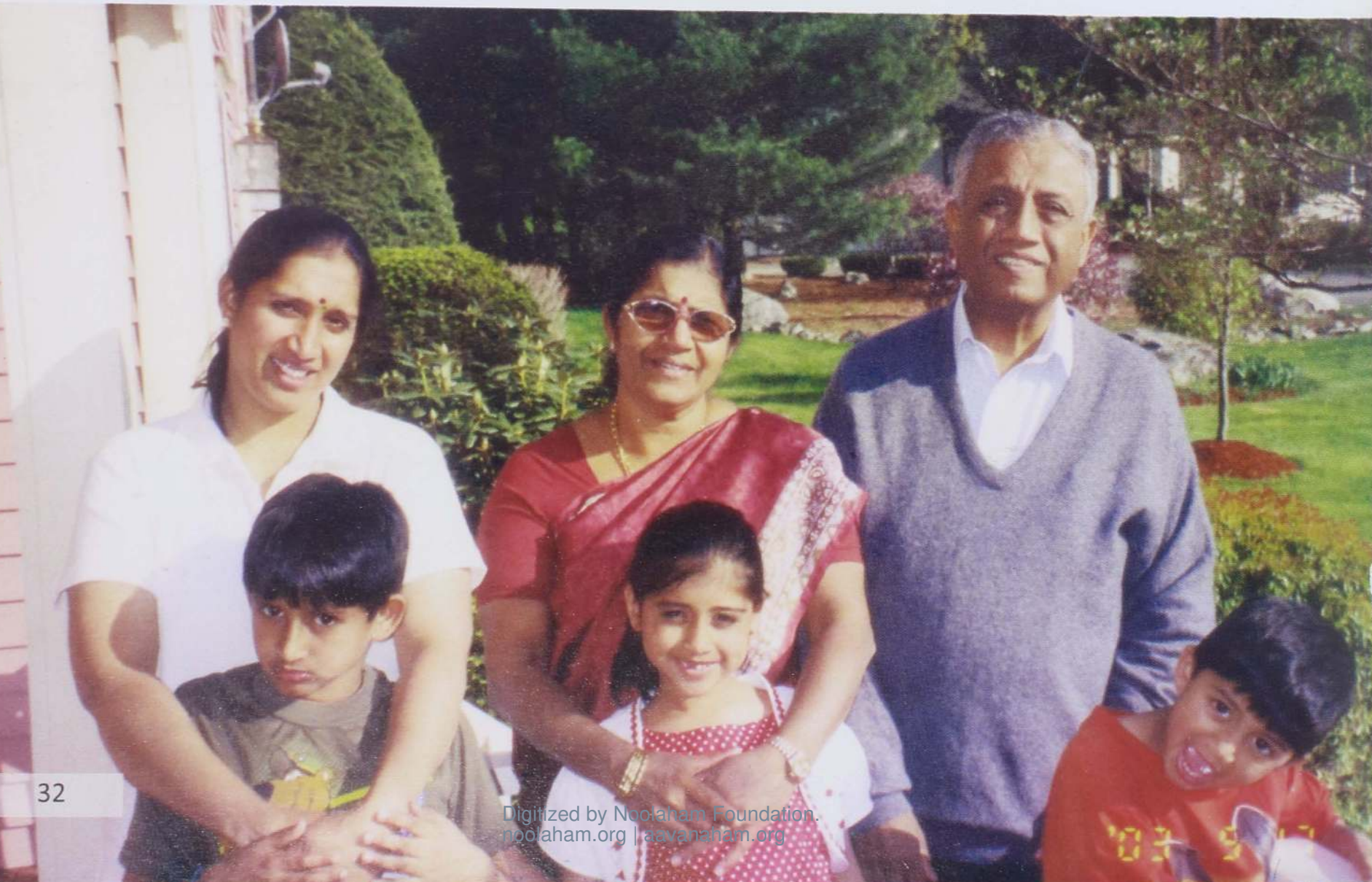
"Appappa has always been a caring person from the day we came to know him and would always be there for us. Whenever he had the opportunity he would spend time with us and relate past incidents giving an insight into life as it were. Appappa is a person who admires excellence and would be proud of any of achievement we excel in."

Apart from academics, Suhasini is a versatile Bharatha Natyam dancer and had her Arangetram nearly four years ago, when she turned fourteen. Inculcated with traditional values, Suhasini intends to do her Veena Arangetram in July. Suhasini is proud of her grandfather's achievements in every field which she says are god given.



A clear concise description of a grandfather by the eldest grandson

Ashwin, the eldest grandchild is nineteen years and vividly recalls his grandfather. He is into Bio Medical Engineering at Rensselaer University in Troy, New York State. Ashwin is also resident in the US with his parents. 'I would see Appappa three or four times a year and spend time with him. I have a good rapport with him. He understands me and I understand him. Appappa would always advise us on day-to-day life and how we should conduct our lives in the world. I hope I live up to his expectations being his eldest grandchild... A sober thought expressed by a loving grandson.



“What reverberates in my mind is Appappa’s acts of charity which I also hope to emulate. He is always into giving the less fortunate.

“The baby of the team is fifteen-year-old Guhan who loves to play tennis and is into photography. He also plays the guitar. As for eastern music he is an exponent on the Mridangam (percussion instrument like the Thabla).

“Guhan’s take of his grandfather is taking good care of him. I take good care of Appappa be it in Sri Lanka or India. I think he is a smart person and has left us a legacy and we should carry it over. He is a very caring person and is fond of us. His enigmatic smile has left a lasting impression on us.

“Taking after their beloved Appappa, all three grandchildren are keen to help the needy in Sri Lanka, following the footsteps of their Appappa and Appa. On their annual visit to Sri Lanka they ensure that they interact with the orphans at the Ratmalana Hindu College Hostel supported by the Manitha Neyam Trust. Although resident in the US they are fairly fluent in Tamil and of course they are deeply religious and visit Swami Shantanand’s Ashram in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.



Appappa engaged in tree planting for the benefit of next generation who look on



Grand parents with Grand childrens

Brief encounters...
Brief encounters...
Brief encounters...

We are titling it brief encounters not because the encounters Mr. Kailasapillai had with his extended family were brief, but because we are going to touch on some relatives who had a close link with Mr. Kailasapillai and give a brief insight of their perception of the humanity he garnered.

A brother-in-law's tale

Subramaniam Sangarappillai , a brother-in-law of Mr. Kailasapillai had just returned to Sri Lanka with his wife, Shiranee after being with their children in Australia for a year, when we spoke to him.

"Being a closely knit family we had close connections with 'Periaththan' (Mr. Kailasapillai) and my sister. He is my cousin as well as my brother-in-law. Our bonds are deep. He is a person who will encourage anyone to study and do well in life. He was a source of inspiration for my daughter who ended up being an accountant just like him. If anything was done well he did not stinge on appreciation. He would encourage and appreciate anything that needed to be applauded.



Family members in the shade of 'Aalam'



Kalais family with Sangarapillai

"My son did his Masters in Business Administration and even where he was concerned, Periatthan was his mentor and guide, such was the encouragement and inspiration he exuded. When it comes to finance, he was ready to spend for anyone's education. He was generous to a fault. In his book of life everyone should do well.

'Periatthan' is extremely kind-hearted. I married Shiranee, who is a Sinhalese, about forty years ago when it was taboo to marry from another race. 'Periatthan' did not object but explained the difficulties that both of us have to face due to the differences in culture and practices and said that we must be prepared to adjust to these cultural barriers. He accepted her as one of the family and in fact convinced other family members too to accept Shiranee and welcome her. My brother-in-law was and is a father figure to the two of us and Periatthan's contention is that we are one family and should remain as one."

Shiranee Manel nee Karunaratne married Subramaniam Sangarapillai over forty years ago and has blended well into the family. She met her husband while working at the Department of Census and Statistics. Her first impression of Mr. Kallasapillai are vivid in her memory even though it is forty years down the line. "Although I was a Sinhalese he was open and readily accepted me into the family. There were no issues at all and he warmly welcomed me. To this day he is still the same. A warm hearted and generous person."

"In fact such was his acceptance that even in the early days he would bully me and make me feel comfortable. I never felt out of place because Periaththan and my sister-in-law took me in with open arms. He was the person who convinced the other family members to accept me and take me into the family."

What a sister-in law has to say...

Sivammalar known as Malar is one of the three sisters of Mrs Kailasapillai and she spent her adult life at the Kailasapillai home. Malar studied at St Lawrence's, Wellawatte and Hindu Ladies College in Jaffna. A good cook, she delved into the culinary tastes of Mr. Kailasapillai 'He likes tasty food and requested for whatever type of food he wanted. Being a vegetarian he had special preferences and was a connoisseur of vegetarian food

From the time I knew him, the one thing I observed was that he was quick to grasp anything. We always had a cordial relationship and I looked up to him as an older brother. He always fulfilled my needs without keeping any shortcomings. If I wanted anything he would never question and ensured that I would get it. Even if it was anything personal such as a wrist watch he would see that I got it and the cost was of no consequence. He treated me like a younger sister. The one thing that he loves where food is concerned is baked patties and I ensured that I made them for him.

There were times when he would enter the kitchen and attempt to cook but he would end up messing the kitchen!



Dr. V. Ambalavarar on the Left Malar on the right with kailas family

.....spun the family fabric
.....spun the family fabric
.....spun the family fabric

Mr. Kailasapillai has not only steered the JKH ship to wider vistas, he has also spun the family fabric with various hues to bring out a whole new version.

Shanthi Kumari Manoharasivam worked for the Kailasapillais from the age of 17. She started with designing textiles and as time went by she was absorbed into the household as a member of the family. She recalls pleasant memories and is still with the Kailasapillais. 'Never a harsh word was said by Mr. Kailasapillai. He was the embodiment of kindness. He always felt the needs of the others and was ever ready to reach out.'

Her two children Kajeepan has read for a Bachelor of Engineering Degree from Swinburne University in the UK and studied at Royal College where he got his primary and secondary education. It was at Kailas mama's insistence that I went to the UK to pursue my higher studies. He ensured that I got everything that I needed for my education as well as other need. They took care of me and my sister like their very own.

Her daughter Nilanthi has a Bsc in Psychology from ANC. An old girl of Methodist College, she was full of praise for the Kailasapillais. 'They saw that we were educated and Kailas mama was personally interested in our education. They looked after us as if we their own children looking into every need and fulfilling many of our aspirations. Today I am where I am because of the inspiration given by Kailas mama. God will bless them both.

Gowri Thevasenathipathy , a close niece of the Kailasapillais was also educated at Methodist College. "We were like one family. I grew up in the same house and there was no difference whatsoever shown to me. I was treated like one of the family. I am the same age as Aravinthan and I had the same attention that was given to him. I looked upto Asaiappu as my own father. They helped me to go to India and I did my B Sc there. Mr and Mrs Kailasapillai are like two peas in a pod. The two of them saw to it that I was well settled. Their calm approach to life helped me and gave me strength.. Asaiappu would advice me if there was a problem and I readily accepted his advise. They were my god parents."



Kailas with his cousin Sankar in Canada

Financial Wizardry
Financial Wizardry
Financial Wizardry

Mr. Kailasapillai then joined Mercantile Credit as Chief Accountant. He was also senior Accountant at the now defunct Colombo Commercial Company. Talking of the times gone by, Mr. Kailasapillai said "It was not challenging those days".

"John Keells was a fledgling Company at the inception ". It was I who initiated John Keells to flourish- from one company to several companies ", he said. Mr. Kailasapillai spoke of the vast strides JKH has made and the inroads it has traversed at present. "There were not many mountains to climb. It was automatic, moving from one thing to another, Kailasapillai said as he was prone to simplicity and called a spade a spade. He never made a mountain out of a molehill or vice versa. Knowledge inspires passion and he was knowledgeable in whatever endeavour he undertook and the passion which followed drove him through the terrain helping him to end up where he did.

Going back to structuring the John Keells Group of Companies, Mr. Kailasapillai said "My plum situation was building up John Keells". This statement spoke volumes about the services he rendered to his beloved John Keells." In the Boardroom when problems arose, time and again, all eyes are directed at me and I give a solution without batting an eyelid." He said in slow, measured tones. Mr. Kailasapillai was full of admiration for his one- time boss Ken Balendra who was at the helm of John Keells.' Ken Balendra was the frontliner. I worked behind the scenes. "The blend of the two of them brought John Keells to where it is today. Mr. Kailasapillai wizardry as the Finance Director of John Keells Group helped JKH's rise as a leading conglomerate.

As recorded in "Legacy" (the John Keells commemorative publication) -

"...important influence on the diversification programme was V. Kailasapillai. The Finance Director showed himself to be an expert at capitalizing on incentives and concessions offered by the government to promote the development of specific industries and business sectors. He was even more adept at identifying ways to reduce the tax burden on the group and its shareholders by taking advantage of official tax breaks and shelters. These talents were useful enough in the days of the United Front, but when that regime was replaced by an enterprise-friendly government eager to use the private sector as an instrument of growth, Kailasapillai was in his element. In the report quoted above, Mark Bostock notes that 'the investment policy of the Company has enabled shareholders to receive a fair slice of their return free of tax'. They did so thanks to the financial wizardry of V. Kailasapillai."

With tea and tourism taking a back step, most of John Keells' income in the late eighties came from Keells Food Products and the other businesses the group diversified into. Turnover and profits continued to rise year on year, as much as a tribute to V. Kailasapillai's financial ability as it was to the improving business climate.

Mr. Kailasapillai and his colleagues, having delved into the capital-conjuring magic of the stock market relatively early, were determined to make the group and its holding company as investor-friendly as possible.

Trade in company shares was low at the beginning of the Eighties. Very few companies were publicly quoted and there was little investment capital available. The share market was the preserve of a handful of wealthy, knowledgeable investors...." However, Mr. Kailasapillai with his financial wizardry put John Keells Holdings Limited on the Colombo Stock Exchange map on October 9, 1986.

When Mr. Seenivasagam Swaminathan, Chartered accountant now living in retirement in USA was contacted he said that it was a great pleasure to join in paying tribute to Kailas on his 80th birthday. He added:-

"I have known him since his schooldays in the 1940s .We lived in the same neighbourhood and had many common relatives.

"He lost both his father at an early age and he and his younger brother Dr Ambalavanar grew up under the care of their grand uncle Mr Chellappah.

"He graduated from the University of Ceylon Colombo taught for a short while, and took up to and studying Accountancy.

"After qualifying he joined Mercantile Credit Ltd and had the opportunity to work with Mr N. U. Jayawardene., who at that time was considered a financial wizard. I have no doubt that he benefitted tremendously from this association. From there he joined Colombo Commercial Co one of the largest business conglomerates at that time. He had a very successful career there when he was invited by John Keells Ltd to join their Board of Directors.

"Here his talents were highly valued and appreciated and he started blossoming into an entrepreneur... John Keells consolidated and formed John Keells Holdings Ltd, went public and by the time he retired in 1994 as Deputy Chairman the company was the Number One in the Colombo Stock Exchange

"He was active in the affairs of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka, having served as member of the Council, Vice President and lecturer at the Business School Sri Parthasarathy of the Chinmaya Mission and Swami Shanthananda were his Gurus and they had a very positive influence in his life. He took a very active role in the activities and in the affairs of the Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society (of which Board of Trustees in chaired by him), Hindu College and the All Ceylon Hindu Congress. He also founded the Charitable organization Manithaneyam which was established to rehabilitate the poor students and victims of war. In his voluntary work he had the active support of his wife Kamala.

"The Kailases were and are a tremendous source of strength to their extended family which includes me, We pray that they be blessed with good health and long life so that they can continue to serve fellow human beings"

Receiving Sri Parthasarathy at a Function in Colombo



‘ We hit it off... ’
‘ We hit it off... ’
‘ We hit it off... ’

Ken Balendra, the well-known business magnate who was at the helm of John Keells spelt out his sentiments about the ‘brain’ behind the success of John Keells

I got to know Kailas in mid 1973 when he joined John Keells from the Colombo Commercial Company. Thereafter the two of us were heavily involved in the diversification of John Keells, under the guidance of Mark Bostock, Chairman, D P D M de Silva, Deputy Chairman, and David Blackler, a senior Director. Kailas and I clicked straightaway and became close friends. He had a degree in Mathematics, and received a prestigious prize at the final examination of Chartered Accountancy . We were both elevated to the main John Keells Board on 1 April 1974.

Kailas’s first challenge at John Keells was when Mark and D.P.D.M. bought the Mackinnons Group over. Kailas took upon himself the challenge of making the Mackinnons Group a profitable subsidiary of John Keells. Along with a few other senior people in finance at John Keells, he spent long hours at Mackinnons. They set the ball rolling and with the support of Cyril Lawrence, who was the Managing Director of the Company and Tissa Molligoda who was a Director of Mackinnons, they swung it round to be a profitable entity almost immediately. It was in this task that Kailas was first ably assisted by Manel, his Secretary, who continued to be his Secretary in John Keells until his retirement.

If one was to go through the book **LEGACY** (John Keells and the story of Sri Lanka Business) authored by Richard Simon, one can confirm that Kailas was indeed the financial wizard that I have claimed him to be on repeated occasions throughout his career at John Keells, and even thereafter.



I recollect an incident when he and I, along with others, were at a meeting chaired by the well-known Civil Servant, Mr Baku Mahadeva, as the Secretary of the Treasury. There was a stage when a long discussion took place over a strategic financial issue. It sounded as though it would never end. Kailas jotted something down on a scrap of paper and passed it along to the Chairman who read through it, was silent for a couple of minutes and then announced, “Why are we going on and on about this issue. Here is the solution” and read out Kailas’s

handwritten note on the scrap of paper that had been passed on to him.

Many of those present were surprised at the quick solution and they realized that Kailas had a computer-like brain.

Kailas was a Chartered Accountant and at that time, and I believe even now, most products of the prestigious Institute of Chartered Accountants, have a negative attitude towards most entrepreneurial suggestions. Kailas was an exception. More often than not, he saw the vision and supported it to the hilt. David Blackler repeatedly said that if he ever became a dictator of a country, he would immediately appoint Kailas as his Finance Minister. Kailas and David were never interested in politics.

Vivendra Lintotawela who took over from me as Chairman of the Group, had this to say of Kailas:

“Mr. Kailasapillai is one of the greatest business and financial brains we have in this country, in terms of tax as well as strategizing.”

In addition to being the Group Finance Director of John Keells Holdings, which was set up on suggestions made by Kailas, he was also the Chairman of the Colombo Stock Exchange, which at that time, was in its infancy. It was with Kailas’s pro-active leadership that the Stock Exchange began to bloom.

Over and above financial matters connected with the Group, Kailas whole-heartedly involved himself in numerous other activities. He was supported in his efforts by his charming and bubbly wife, Kamala.

I also recollect Kailas being in the team comprising myself, Ajit, and Anushya, going on a whirlwind trip to Singapore, Hong Kong, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, New York, and San Francisco, to be back in Singapore in 11 nights, to promote the Global Depository Receipts (GDR) issue. Although senior to us in age, Kailas took this hectic trip in his stride.

One morning as we were waiting in the hotel lobby to be picked up, when he was not feeling too well on account of his diabetic treatment. He excused himself, went up to his room, had a slab of chocolates and came down to the lobby, saying “Let’s go.”

In the 1983 pogrom, Kailas and his family were severely affected. His house in Kirillapone was burned and Vivendra Lintotawela, who later became Chairman of the Company, pressurized him to move his family and himself to his residence. Later on David Blackler and his wife Jennifer took them under their wing.

Following the ‘black Friday’ riots during which a couple of Kailas’s relatives were murdered, he took the decision to evacuate to Malaysia. After several weeks I was one of those who persuaded him to return to Sri Lanka, which he did. Once he returned, he put his shoulder to the wheel again, to the great benefit of the John Keells Group.

Kailas and Kamala were always charitable people. After Kailas’s retirement, the two of them have spearheaded numerous charities across the country.





Dambulla Temple



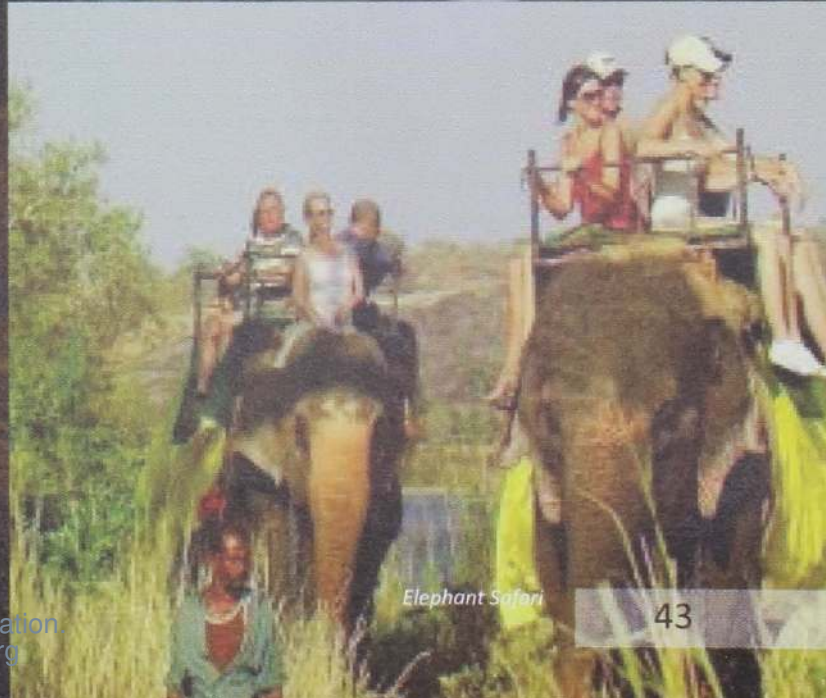
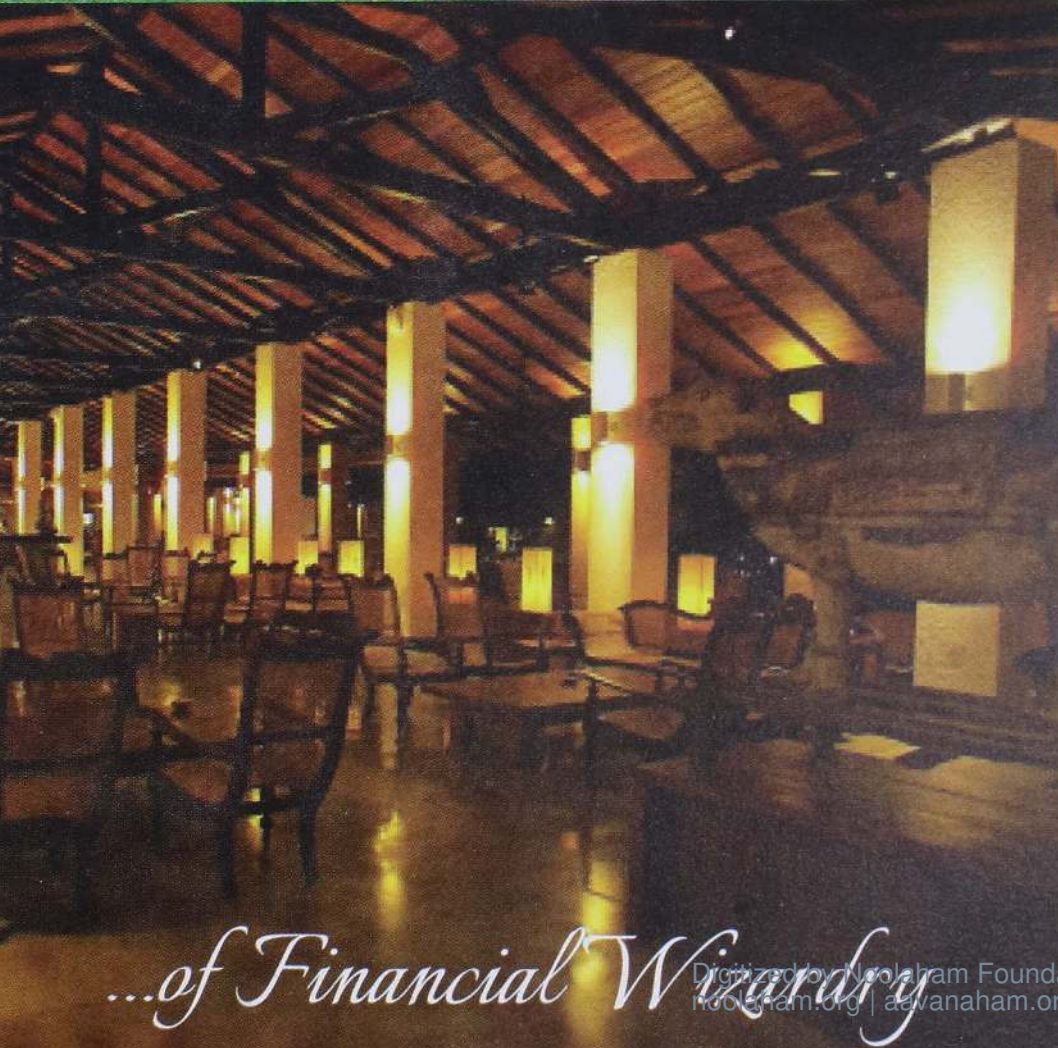
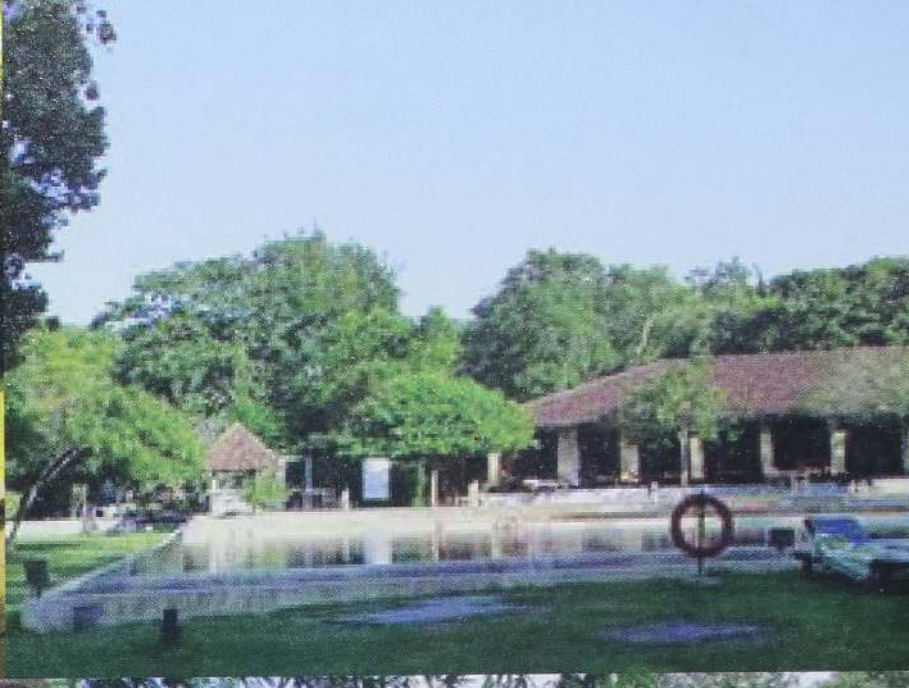
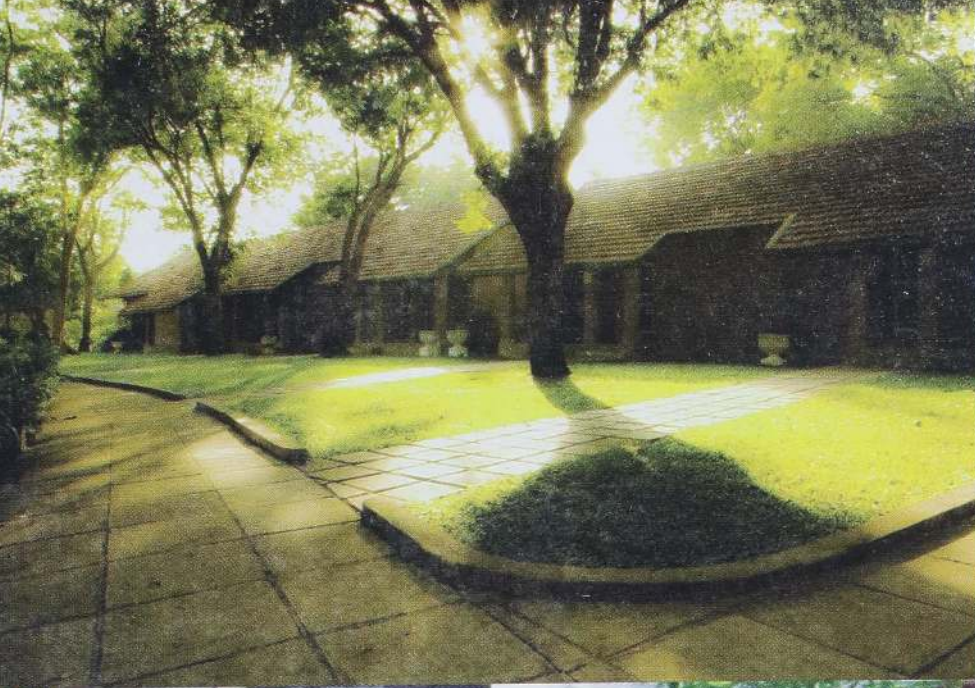
Sigiriya



From the Vision of...



Keels & Hotels (now branded 'Chayaa') at Habarana - near Dambulla and Sigiriya



Left behind a rich legacy
Left behind a rich legacy
Left behind a rich legacy



“Susantha Ratnayake, president Chairmen in John Keells says:

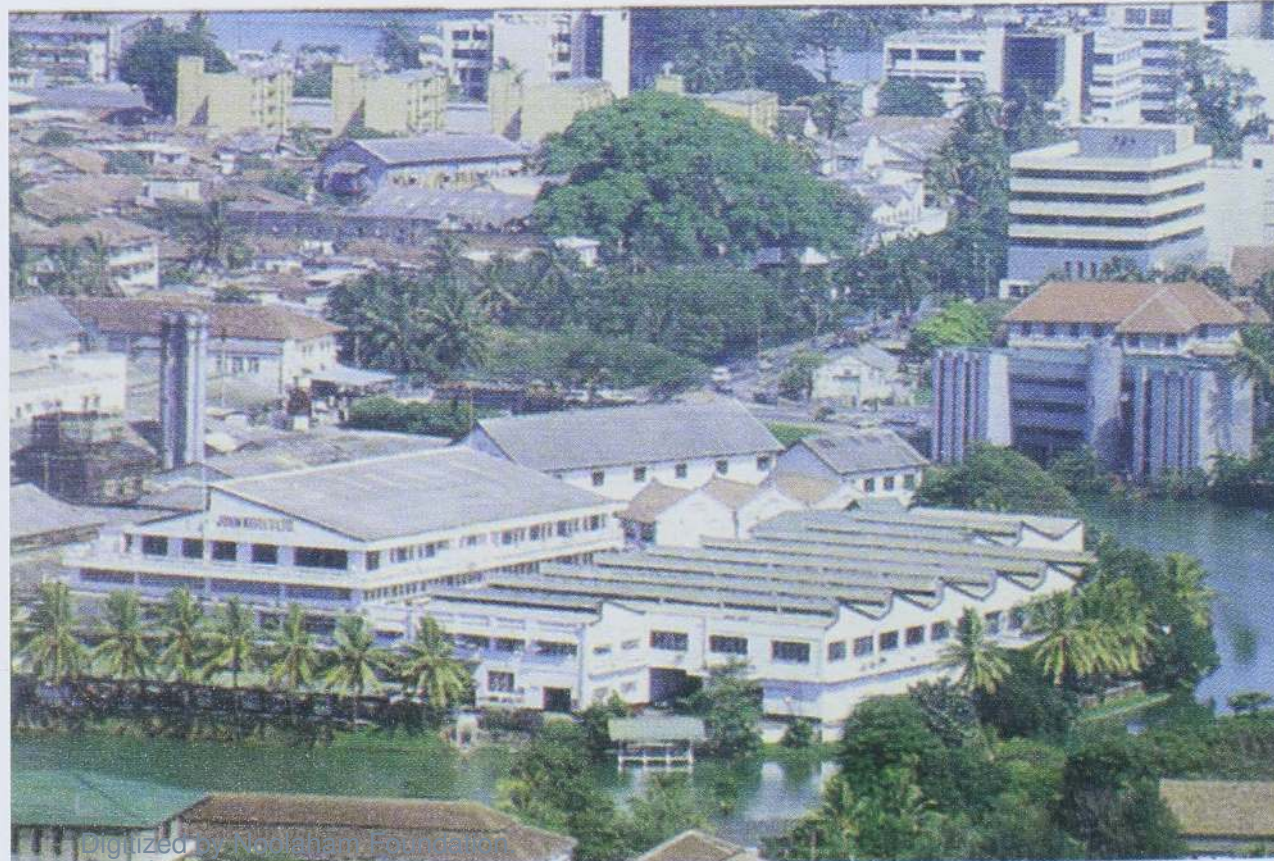
I first came in contact with Mr.V.Kaliasapillai, one and a half years after I joined John Keells in the early eighties. Initially I handled the travel section of the company and since then I began interacting with him closely. He was an amazing personality. He guided us like his children not only from a professional perspective but even through our personal lives as well.

“He taught us the finer points of our profession on how to deal with business -related matters and the art of overcoming challenges.

“Mr. Kailasapillai played an unprecedented role in the transformation of John Keells. He introduced not only a well-tailored financial imperative but also other aspects and trades for the betterment of the institution. He structured the company in a way that it could take all the physical incentives that were available which were indeed complex. Mr. Kailasapillai has to be credited for financial restructuring and for the key role he played in the diversification of John Keells Holdings.

Aerial view of John Keells

“The one thing I really admired in Mr. Kailasapillai was that he hardly made use of a calculator. When it came to numbers he was so good, he would make calculations instantly and came out with answers in next to no time. His forte was finance. But he didn't confine himself to finance. He saw different perspectives for various issues. Specially, while interacting with young people like us, he always encouraged us



to come out with new ideas, and new thinking. He never stifled enthusiasm. Mr. Kailasapillai was ready for change and absorbed any new thinking which was of assistance to the company.

“At this juncture two things come to my mind. Firstly when I was made a director of our subsidiary I was asked by Mr. Bostock to take over the airlines division of John Keells and the division was in a crisis situation with a loss of around rupees five or six million at that time. Since I was made the director I was asked by Mr. Bostock to meet Mr. Kailasapillai who would tell me the terms and conditions. I went to Mr. Kailasapillai and expected him to tell me what my new salary structure and perks were. Whereas he never made any reference to that but expected me to make a profit of rupees ten million in the next financial year from the loss of rupees six million it had incurred. I was tasked with stabilizing the financial state of the company’s airlines sector. However, we made it and in the next year we doubled the profit by making rupees ten million.

“The second thing I vividly remember is that when I got a job offer overseas, Mr. Kailasapillai came to me and convinced me to remain at John Keells. If I had gone on that foreign venture I wouldn’t have been in the position I am now. Therefore, I am grateful to Mr. Kailasapillai for giving me the right advice at the right time.

“He was always open to new thinking and somewhat ahead of his time and willing to listen to other people. It was refreshing to see senior people encouraging the juniors to take up challenges of new mega projects.

“As this iconic personality turns 80 years all of us at John Keells wish him the very best and many more years to come and express our gratitude for the firm foundation he laid at John Keells which has enabled us to conquer all obstacles and forge ahead and for the rich legacy he has left behind.”



Left to Right: Mr. A. D. Gunewardene, Miss. A. Coomaraswamy, Mr. S. C. Ratnayake, Mr. C. J. Fernando, Mr. V. Lintotawela, Mr. V. Kailasapillai, Mr. K. Balendra

He outshone his peers
He outshone his peers
He outshone his peers

Ajit D. Gunewardene, Deputy Chairman of John Keells Holdings PLC recalls the unwavering support and encouragement extended by no lesser person than the veritable financial wizard of his time -Mr. Kailasapillai. Ajit Gunewardene was recruited by Mr. Kailasapillai and rose to where his now.

O Ship of State

*Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,*

*'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee.
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee, -are all with thee!
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

This poem by Henry W. Longfellow to a great extent expresses the sentiments expressed by Ajit Gunewardene.

"I joined John Keells in 1982, I was just a lad of 24. I was recruited as a foreign exchange broker into a new company that was launched by John Keells. Mr Kailasapillai painted such a vivid picture of this company and John Keells , his passion was infectious. From then on there was no looking back. I was fortunate to have Mr. Kailasapillai as my mentor, in my formative years.

He had an incisive mind and a photographic memory. His accounting brilliance outshone his peers. Mr. Kailasapillai wasn't the stereotypical accountant. He always had aggressive ideas. He was one who had growth objectives in mind.

"Mr. Kailasapillai remained a simple and humble human being. Always willing to impart knowledge and his vast experience to allow the younger generation to learn and grow. He had a great influence on me imparting his knowledge which enabled me to grow.

"I gained and grew through his experience. I was fortunate to be his understudy for so many years.

Braving storms with high seas a group of elite *ship* pilots steers tankers and ... dozen miles out to sea, it looks like a ten-story-tall anvil plowing through the water...

A strategist par excellence
A strategist par excellence
A strategist par excellence

Immediate past chairman of John Keells Holdings, Mr Vivendra Lintotawela pays tribute to a man who was a financial wizard and worked closely with him.

I consider it an honour and a privilege to send my contribution to a book to celebrate the 80th birthday of Mr V. Kailasapillai.

I have known Mr. Kailasapillai since 1976 when he head hunted and offered me employment at John Keells while I was attached to the Colombo Commercial Company. After a brief stint at John Keells, I left for Zambia having secured a job there. The persistent professional that Mr. Kailasapillai was, he wrote persuading me to return home offering me re-employment at John Keells. I was touched by the faith he had in me and my abilities and hence returned as requested. I thereby had the pleasure of working closely with the man we honour today until he retired from John Keells in 1996.

Without any doubt or hesitation, I state boldly that Mr. Kailasapillai was a financial wizard, tax planner and strategist par excellence. He never sought personal glory and was a modest and decent member of the Company we all wanted to see succeed in all of its ventures. While others assisted tangibly, it is Mr. Kailasapillai's financial structuring that helped to lay the solid foundation on which the modern John Keells is built. That today it has emerged as one of the leading Blue Chips in Sri Lanka is thanks mostly to Mr. Kailasapillai's vision, drive and motivation.

He was confident without being reckless. He was not averse to sensible risk taking. He persuaded us, himself included, when other avenues were blocked, to give personal guarantees as collateral to Banks to secure facilities for meaningful expansion of the John Keells Group. He was a tremendous team player and was more than happy to share his knowledge and experience with colleagues. He was an exemplary guide and mentor to the youngsters in the Company. His caring for all of his colleagues paved the way for the sharing of wealth created by John Keells across the board--- with many levels of employees instead of a handful of Senior Directors. Such was his selfless devotion to John Keells as a whole.

I wish to end on a personal note. In 1983, when sectarian violence engulfed Colombo and the lives of Mr. Kailasapillai and his family were endangered, I was able to give him a modicum of support and care in return for the vast amounts he had given me . I was able to safely transport the Kailasapillai's away from harm and keep them safe at my home during the initial critical days before he moved into Keell Hall.

As you reach the milestone of four score years, Mr. Kailasapillai I salute you and thank you for all the goodness you have afforded John Keells in general and me in particular. I wish you continued good health, peace of mind, joy and contentment in the years ahead.

The wind beneath the sails –

The indomitable Mr. Kailasapillai

The indomitable Mr. Kailasapillai

The indomitable Mr. Kailasapillai

We live in times of constant addiction to the notion of 'a click of a button' that often times makes us wonder, how, men of yore went about with their lives during which a phone call was a luxury. Often we are reminded and told by those of an era bygone, that life was not complicated. A contract was made over a simple handshake, a meeting scheduled would be held at exactly the anointed time, and lovers in their youthful dilemmas would wait months to hear from the better half, awaiting the postman to drop by each day.

As much as the above seemed simple facts of life, it is indeed incomprehensible that large business conglomerates which have gone on to be on par with the best in the world were built in this backdrop. Many today would not argue that the financial steadfastness of any organization revolves around the technical and technological acumen of its accountants, often forgetting that accountants of yore possessed acumen that was technical and technological to a fault. Only with a different setting which predates the evolution we have experienced during the past two decades. Accountants physically checked out on Spreadsheets and accounts logged in CR Books. This is how financial records were stored. Unbelievable but true this is how it worked a good twenty years ago!

At the pinnacle of this acumen, a visionary and a corporate legend beyond his time was at the helm of the financial arm of John Keells Holdings, witnessing a 'blow by blow' account of the company's meteoric rise, through the storms and obstacles that presented themselves in diverse and varied forms. The 'Wind and the Waves were indeed by the side of the ablest navigator' who watched his ship sail through to rise the peaks it has, today.

John Keells Holdings was no exception and the accountants of that time vouch that this was really so. One would think how did they have the time and patience to flit through pages and pages of accounts neatly recorded in spreadsheets and CR books. JKH contributed to this in no small measure contributed to this formidable feat because it was directly taken care of by financial wizard Mr V. Kailasapillai. During a tete-a-tete with two of his protégés at the tranquil residence of the man himself, we were given a sneek but comprehensive view of how the man worked with a firm fist going hand in hand with an unmistakable charm he exuded in all endeavours that he undertook

The ten- seater dining table was spacious enough for nostalgia and recalling memories which have been locked away for years proved to be a difficult but enjoyable task. Mr. Kailasapillai was at the head at one end and to his left sat his one-time accountant and Financial Director, Anushya Coomaraswamy. Anushya Coomaraswamy herself is an

accomplished icon being a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants of the UK and the Society of Certified Management Accountants of Sri Lanka.

She has the advantage of having worked for both the public and private sectors, being in the private sector for more than 20 years in senior management positions. From 1994 till 2002, she was the Group Finance Director of John Keells Holdings Limited, one of the leading conglomerates in the Country and one of the largest capitalised companies on the Colombo Stock Market. Miss Coomaraswamy was one of a three-member representation from John Keells Holdings, on an international consortium that negotiated a US\$240 million project for the development of one quay of the Colombo Port, with the Government of Sri Lanka and Multilateral and Bilateral Lending Institutions, with specific responsibility for the Project's Financial Model.

She resigned from John Keells Holdings in 2002 and joined the Ministry of Finance in January 2003 as an Advisor working directly with the Deputy Secretary to the Treasury. It is with people of this calibre that Mr. Kailasapillai worked with and oversaw their ability. According to Anushya, she worked with ease with Mr. Kailasapillai but he was a task master. Calling for maximum contribution from his subordinates at every turn, Mr. Kailasapillai was well aware of each person's capacity and capability and so he called for their best.

If he did not approve of any deal, Mr. Kailasapillai made no bones about it and expressed his displeasure. His integrity in his dealings were admired and followed by his subordinates. Mr. Kailasapillai's honesty of purpose would have been clearly writ on his face thus making no qualms of his displeasure when he found things not meeting his expectations. One could expect that he signaled his pleasure and displeasure in almost the same manner as he was a man of a few words.

Anushya stressed the fact that Mr. Kailasapillai stuck to the adage that punctuality was the key to the success of any organisation. He was a man who swore by this adage and would never tolerate delay and unpunctuality.

Talking of the amalgamation of John Keells Holdings, Anushya Commaraswamy's rather staid expression changed to one of awe when she said, "He, (referring to Mr. Kailasapillai) was the financial brain while the commercial brain was that of Mr Ken Balendra. So you can imagine the outcome when both these brains were put together. The two of them had the same thought process and they conveyed this to us and always discussed any decision with us before implementation".

Anushya Coomaraswamy was in not-so-many-words admiring her one time boss for his ability to accommodate views of his subordinates, even though they were quite aware that whatever decision Mr. Kailasapillai took would not jeopardize John Keells Holdings. Anushya was admiring this trait of accommodation and ability to discuss issues before implementation.

Being an old girl of Ladies College and having a financial background having worked in a firm of accountants before joining JKH, Anushya knew her onions and knew what was required of her, the Deputy Chairman Mr. Kailasapillai called the shots. She was comfortable in her surroundings and had no reason to complain, she said. "It was difficult at the beginning but I had a huge respect for Mr. Kailasapillai's financial achievement". A trait Anushya greatly admired. "Mr. Kailasapillai was not the type of person who ordered people about. He valued contribution from all sides and

then came to a conclusive whole, which might be the reason for his huge success in moving up the corporate ladder.”

His willingness to share and his willingness to teach, were traits which she valued and admired. This is rarely found in people especially in this era where most people are ego-centric and unable to share and give of their knowledge to others. Elaborating further Anushya said “Another important aspect is that you could always argue with him and explain matters. And if he was convinced he did not hesitate to take the ideas on board and carry it out to perfection. He was demanding”. Anushya paused a bit and said “That was because he knew what we were capable of. We had to give our one hundred and one percent and then he would wholeheartedly agree if we hit the right chord.”

He never stinged on appreciation. If something was done with aplomb he never failed to appreciate it and visibly showed his appreciation”. We were able to convey our ideas and argue with him and discuss with him even though there was a tier of decision makers between us and Mr. Kailasapillai.” This was the kind of relationship Mr. Kailasapillai had established with his subordinates and which steered the ‘JKH ship’ to the depths of the ocean. One can understand that John Keells immensely benefited by such relationships, and the esteem with which she held and still holds Mr. Kailasapillai, would leave no one in doubt of whom she thought the wind and the waves sided.

Boss in his office with his staff including Manel who is 2nd from right, Nita at extreme right and Ravikumar at extreme Left



Irreplaceable in the mirage of time

Irreplaceable in the mirage of time

Irreplaceable in the mirage of time

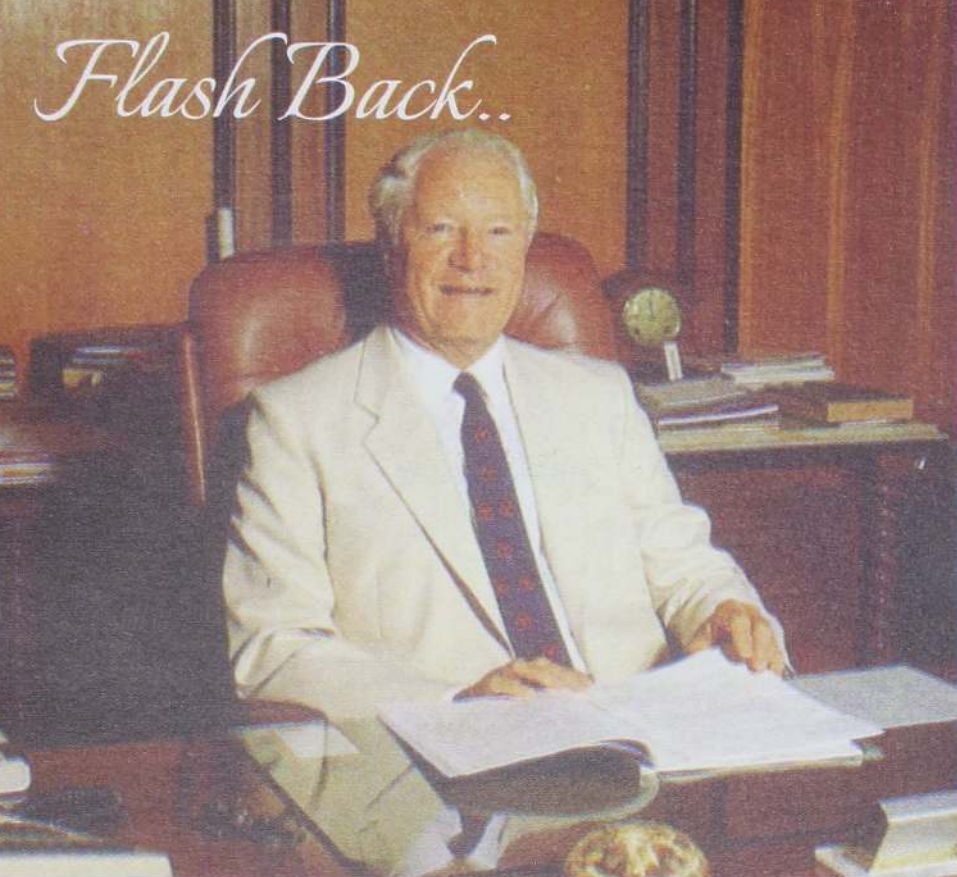
“Steering the ship through crests and waves in the mirage of time and space it is undoubtedly hard to comprehend that so many ‘sailors’ have so happily studied and worked with the ‘Captain of the ship’, the financial wizard of all time- the indefatigable Mr. Kailasapillai. Here we go with another insight into his management abilities through the eyes of a secretary who worked for him. In fact she was his first secretary.” Manel Kuruculasuriya who is also a financial expert in her own right. She started her career in Mckinnons in 1964 at a tender age of seventeen years. In 1979 she shifted to John Keells with the merger with Mckinnons. Mr. Kailasapillai said “Until you joined me I did not have a secretary”. His work multiplied and he needed managerial assistance into his affairs and he turned to Manel who ably assisted him in this endeavor. “I was not just a secretary. I handled salaries and was the salaries executive at that time’ Manel handled Mr. Kailasapillai’s confidential work and he was more than happy with her entry into his confidential world. “Not once did he complain that anything was amiss. Even if I had not done something to his specification he would point it out in a clear and dignified manner. Thus we were ready to make whatever changes and get it right”.

“He guided me throughout my career at John Keells pointing out my shortcomings but at the same time appreciating all the effort I was putting into the work. It was a pleasure working for him and we learned such a lot through his simple yet dignified approach. Manel was amplifying Mr. Kailasapillai’s ability to spot when something was wrong” He was quick to spot any wrong and find a suitable remedy which was the beauty of Mr. Kailasapillai. Very few people give an answer to a shortcoming. It is only a case of pin pointing the fault. This approach was not in Mr. Kailasapillai’s books. He always wanted a clear cut approach and was ready to help. Mr. Kailasapillai was like a detective.’

Anything would not by pass him. He was quick to spot any small shortcoming which many others would have overlooked’, She said. Admiring his ability at every turn. He trusted his employees and gave them the confidence to show off their prowess “I leave it in your able hands” was an oft quoted saying of Mr. Kailasapillai. He never demanded from us and never would he nitpick. He was easy-going and we were able to cope under pressure. Stressing the point that he was never in the habit of fault finding, Manel said ‘Never, never, never”.

He was one person who was so approachable. We could go to him at any time and he would explain and tell us what he wanted or what was wrong. “He was an easy going Boss who could never be replaced” – words of an employee that speaks volumes of a man who was at the helm as it were of top notch institution- Mr. Kailasapillai, the force to be reckoned with.

Flash Back..



Mr. David John Mortan Blackler



(L to R): Viswanathar Kailasapillai, David John Mortan Blackler, Kandiah Balendra, Vivendra Lintotawela
 1st Row: R. P.T Adams, H. D Gunawardena,, G. S. A. Gunasekera, Ms. R. S. Goonawardena, M. A. Abeynaike, C. J Fernando.
 2nd Row: R. T. Molligoda, K. Ariaratnam, A. M. Mohideen, L. D. Ramanayake, S. Ratnayake, A. Gunasekera



John Keells Holdings
 Union Place, Colombo 2



John Keells Complex
 Glennie Street, Colombo 2



Ceylon Cold Stores
 Slave Island Complex



Keells Realtors
 Navam Mawatha, Colombo 2



Mackinnons Building
 York Street, Colombo 1



Whittalls Building
 Vauxhall Street, Colombo 2

Unmistakable work ethic
Unmistakable work ethic
Unmistakable work ethic

“To state the facts frankly is not to despair the future nor indict the past. The prudent heir takes careful inventory of his legacies and gives a faithful **accounting** to those whom he owes an obligation of trust.”

-John Fitzgerald Kennedy

quotes (American 35th US President (1961-63), 1917-1963) Sim

“Mr V Kailasapillai steered the ‘ship’ through every storm , every crest and ever wave...”

Nita de Silva who started off as an accounts trainee culminated her career by ending up as Senior Vice President of John Keells Holdings - a post she is indeed proud to have held. Mr V. Kailasapillai was the virtual head of over seventy John Keells companies. She added “His brain works fast. He was of immense assistance training us in every endeavour we undertook showing us the path and how to get about our work.”

“The beauty about his work is, he did not believe in formality he just got on with the work that was entrusted to him. He was so approachable that even the difficult of things seemed absolutely simple. He really reached out to us. We achieved what we did in the Company largely because of him. Working with him was a rewarding and satisfying encounter.

“Being employed at John Keells was Nita’s first job and last job. Working at John Keells Holdings and working directly for Mr. Kailasapillai was an unforgettable experience. With the diversification of John Keells Holdings the initial training was initiated by Mr. Kailasapillai and we were grounded under him. .He gave us a superb training. No University could have taught us what he taught. It was a training in the University of life. This was the work ethic Mr. Kailasapillai inculcated in his juniors and subordinates. On no occasion, under even the most trying circumstances have I seen him losing his temper. He was naturally interested in any task he undertook. What was remarkably noticeable about him was that he was genuinely interested in the welfare of every employee. The care and concern he showed was unmistakable.

“Mr. Kailasapillai ensured that he guided a person through his career, showing them the pros and cons of the business. This was where his strength lay.- the ability to guide everyone and steer them through difficult moments. It was an enhancing experience to have worked under him. My entire career of 34 years was spent in this hallowed institution under the able stewardship of Mr. V. Kailasapillai. He kept the structure in place

He never flustered at any point of time and always kept his cool. Nothing was ever an issue for Mr. Kailasapillai. I enjoyed every minute of my working life under the able leadership of such a great man”

Ravikumar, a long-standing employee of Mr. Kailasapillai worked for Mr. Kailasapillai when he was Financial Director of John Keells Holdings in 1982 till he retired in 1996. His exceptional qualities have left an indelible mark on Ravikumar he had these to say:

“Words are not enough to express his kindness, his guidance and direction. He trained me in Banking. I was the person who went to the bank for him. He reposed immense trust in me. To this day, I still continue working for sir and his family. The trust he placed in me cannot be measured in monetary terms, Sir Loved me. Sir was very strict but at the same time he was kind.

“Sir has helped me in every way possible. He did my wedding. He built my house and even educated my children. He is like a god to me.”



Aerial view of John Keells in 1995



Deputy Chairman heads CSE

Mr. V. Kailasapillai - Deputy Chairman was appointed Chairman of the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) on 20th April 1993 for a term of 2 years. He has been a Board Member of the CSE for several years. His perception and indepth knowledge of Finance and Capital Market operations have undoubtedly earned him this prestigious position.

Mr. Kailasapillai is a Mathematics Honours Graduate of the University of Ceylon. He started his career with John Keells in 1973 when the company was engaged only in Produce and Share Broking. He has imparted his expertise on Finance and Capital Market operations at National, Regional & International Seminars and Workshops serving as paperwriter, rapporteur and panelist. Since taking up the Chair at CSE he has initiated several innovative ideas towards the



Mr. V. Kailasapillai
development of Capital Market operations in Sri Lanka.



DHL chosen over others yet again

Close on the heels of being selected as the Official Courier for LAWASIA '93, DHL comes out on top once again by being named as the Official Courier for Apparel '93 and Expo '94 to be held in November '93 and May '94 respectively. Both fairs are held with a view to fostering Sri Lanka's burgeoning export-related industries by exposure to foreign participants. As a Company that's always committed towards the economic growth of the nation, DHL is proud to assist in the success of both fairs by ensuring that all promotional material, registration forms and just about anything else is reliably distributed expressly to just about anywhere.



(Standing L-R is Mr. Kushlan Perera - Asst. Mgr., Mr. Preethilal Fernando - GM, Mr. Mariano Uretra - Dir/Pasquera Iquique, Mr. Dimuth Jayatunge - Mgr./Bartleets and Mr. Jeremy David - Exec./Bartleets).

MM Shipping tops 1000 containers for Chilean exporter

Pasquera Iquique' one of the main canned fish exporters from Chile presented a plaque to MM shipping in commemoration of 1000 containers shipped to Sri Lanka. They were particularly appreciative to MM Shipping for the premium service offered to them. The goods were carried under the Seaspac Service (National Chilean Lines) which is represented by Mackinnons Shipping.

At the Helm of CSE
At the Helm of CSE
At the Helm of CSE

JKH has been a dominant force in the Colombo stock market since then. Records speak of JKH dominance in the stock market at that time. At one time Mr. Kailasapillai was at the helm of the Colombo Stock Exchange. Once he is determined to move out there is nothing that can keep him and after awhile he stepped down. In 1993, he resigned from the Chairmanship of the Colombo Stock Exchange. It made headline news at that time "Kailasapillai's resignation rocks Colombo Stock Market".

Friends and colleagues were of the view that he should stay on and try as they might to persuade him they failed and by then he had flown to out to Malaysia."

Kailasapillai's home was destroyed in the 1983 pogrom. While his family sought refuge with relatives, he was smuggled into Keells Hall by David Blackler. He remained there, in hiding, for three days. The experience was so traumatic that Kailasapillai vowed to leave Sri Lanka forever. When a semblance of normality had returned to operations at Katunayake Airport, he, his wife and another relative whose father had been murdered by the rioters, were driven to the airport by David and Jennifer Blackler in separate cars. There was anarchy on the streets that day: the mobs were stopping motorists and assaulting those they reckoned were Tamil. "There was all kind of trouble..." says Blackler had said, "I told Jennifer, if we're stopped on the road and I put my flashers on, just do a U-turn and scramble." But the rioters were not interested in vehicles driven by Europeans; the little convoy got through, and Kailasapillai caught his flight to Singapore without incident. He returned much later to Sri Lanka with his family.

He is a teetotaler and a born vegetarian and has never touched a cigarette in his life. "In my strata of life my being a teetotaler, non smoker and strict vegetarian was not of much help. So not for him were the corporate cocktail parties. It is a well-known 'secret' that he declined to be the Chairman of the Group because he felt that he could not throw parties or cocktails to entertain corporate moghuls. Mr. Kailasapillai was a principled man and his strict adherence to norms and principles prevented him from taking on the temporary glory of being Chairman of John Keells and he declined the offer.

CSE Chairman Kailas with the then Business Leaders including Mr. N. U. Jayewardene (3rd from right) and Mr. S. H. Moosajee (at the extreme left)

Kailas at a conference with foreign Stock Market leaders



From CSE Chairman's Album



Hon. Minister C. V. Gooneratne felicitates Kailas



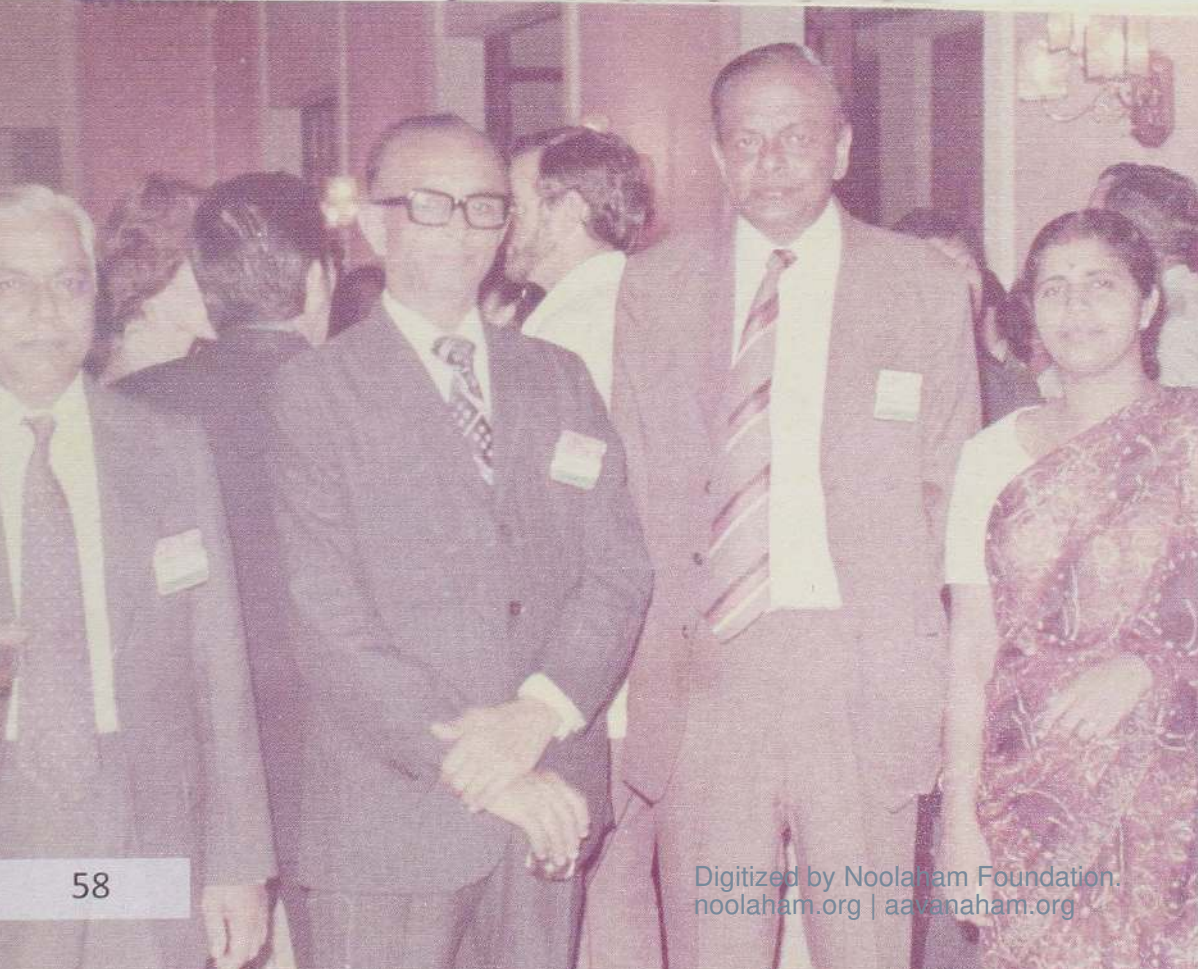
Mr. Peter Samuel (in Centre) with Kailas who was later invited to chair Samuel and Sons Ltd.



From CSE Chairman's Album



Hon. Minister Lalith Athulathmudali at a Seminar with Kailas Gopinath



Divinity, the true sense of inspiration

Divinity, the true sense of inspiration

Divinity, the true sense of inspiration

Carnatic Music is one of the most aesthetic and beautiful musical forms in the world. A pleasant atmosphere is created where the music is honest, natural and from the heart. For both the listener and the performer, the atmosphere in which this music is shared is as much an experience as the music itself. It has the ability to sometimes even to enhance the experience and spur creative impulses. This is the effect Carnatic music had on Kailas "I enjoy Carnatic music", he said. Kailas is musically inclined but through a religious discipline, an ardent follower of His Holiness Swami Shanthanatha who is his Guru and following his Guru's wishes he established a Temple of Fine Arts in Colombo and is deeply involved in inculcating in the younger generation a love for the Arts and tingling their aesthetic sensibilities.

The school of fine Arts is located just a stone's throw away from their residence and is closely monitored by Abhirami. It is a Temple of Fine Arts in the real sense of the word. Less privileged children who are talented are taught free of charge while a nominal amount is taken from the others. Eastern Vocal music, Bharatha Natyam, the violin, the tabla, the guitar, the flute and the organ are all taught by professionals. Examinations are conducted by the North Oriental Music Society. Classes go up to the Fifth Grade which enables a student to be suitably employed once he or she qualifies at this examination. The setting up of the school of Fine Arts is a dream come true for a person who nurtures a religious fervour in every endeavour. His Guru formed the Divine life Society. The school has been set up with a long-term motive to inculcate a love for the Arts and to prevent children from going astray. 'Prayers and bajans held here speak volumes of the services the Institute renders. Mr. Kailasapillai was giving us this information when Mr. Kailasapillai interrupted and said "Why all that" because he felt that there was no need to broadcast the social service rendered by them.

The rent for the College came from Mr. Kailasapillai's own funds. He and his family are indeed charitable and they don't want any publicity for their efforts.

Music class at TFA



Being deeply religious the Kailasapillais had just returned a day or two before we met them after completion the renovation of the family temple in Araly. A sum of Rs five million was spent on renovating the Saraswathy Vidyalayam in Araly where Mr. Kailasapillai had his primary education.


Since his retirement on 31st December 1996 he has been devoted his time to religious and humanitarian services and in particular in helping Children's Homes

**A Mantra always chanted as advised
by Swami**

Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra

*Om Tryambakam Yajamahe
Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam;*

*Urvaarukamiva Bandhanaan -
Mrityormuksheeya Maamritaat*

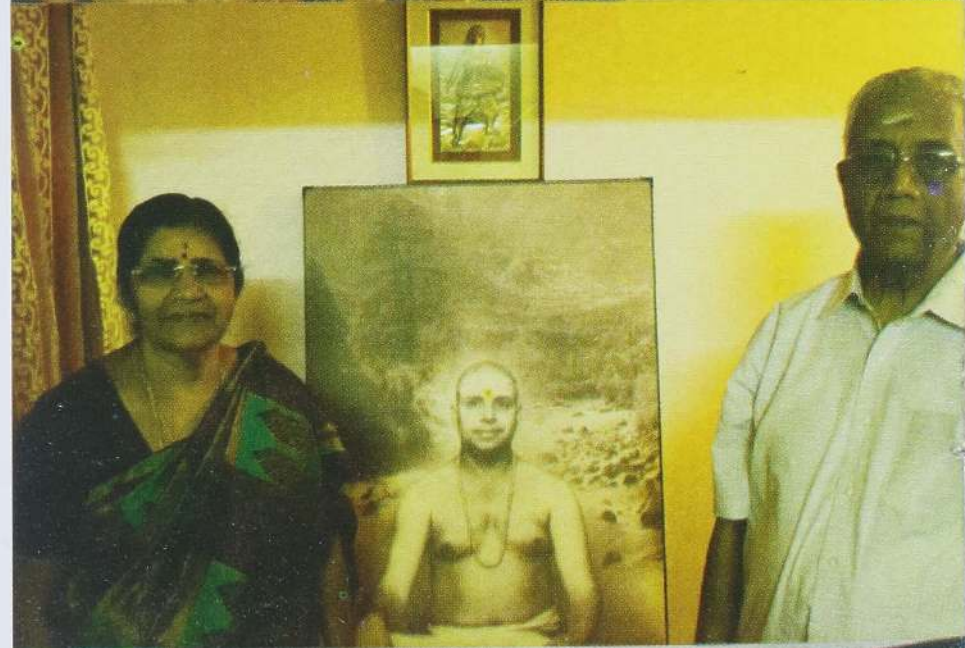
*Om Saha Jhuum Howm
Om Howm Jhuum Saha Om* 

“We worship the three-eyed One (Lord Siva) who is fragrant and who nourishes all beings; may He liberate me from death, for the sake of Immortality, even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage (of the creeper).”

1. This Maha-Mrityunjaya mantra is a life-giving Mantra. In these days, when life is very complex, accidents are an everyday affair; this Mantra wards off death by snake-bite, lightning and accidents of all descriptions. Besides, it has a great curative effect. Again, diseases pronounced incurable by doctors are cured by this Mantra, when chanted with sincerity, faith and devotion. It is a weapon against all diseases. It is a Mantra to conquer death.
2. It is also a Moksha-Mantra. It is Lord Siva's mantra. It bestows health (Arogya), long life (Deergha-Ayus), peace (Santi), wealth (Aisvarya), prosperity (Pushti), satisfaction (Tushti) and Immortality (Moksha).
3. On your birthday, repeat this Mantra one lakh times, or at least 50,000 times, perform Havan and feed Sadhus, the poor and the sick. This will bestow on you health, long-life, peace, prosperity and Moksha.



Love for God. Service to mankind



and Elder' Homes in various places and taking a devoted interest as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society.

Divinity, the true source of inspiration –Temple of Fine Arts embodies this concept Giving children a holistic approach to life is indeed a rapturous task .Teaching the finer points of life through dance and music is an undisputed achievement- the Temple of Fine Arts in Sri Lanka situated in Deal Place, Colombo 3 is one such. It caters to children who are talented and willing to learn .It is the brainchild of the indefatigable Mr. Kailasapilai under the spiritual guidance of His Holiness Swami Shantanand Saraswathi . A serene photograph of Swami Shantanand Saraswathi takes you unawares and looks at you as if formally welcoming you into the temple premises. The Temple of Fine Arts is the professional company and performing wing of the educational institute, Saraswati Mahavidhyalaya Institute of Education.

Music, art and dance, have their origins in the divine, hence, the word "temple". Cultural metaphysics, ancient scriptures and perfected technique are the hallmark of the productions of the Temple of Fine Arts.

Divinity is understood as the true source of creativity and inspiration.

As you enter the premises in Deal Place it is so full of life. Children could be seen practicing in various rooms. A photograph of Gana Deiyo greets you at the entrance and on the left is the shrine room where prayers are conducted daily while group prayers are conducted on Sundays. It is located in a latter day well- built house which has been turned into a temple- a temple for teaching the aesthetic value and appreciation of the Arts. Children are taught by professionals who spare no pains to impress upon the children the value of aesthetics. They are taught various instruments such as the veena, violin, sitar, tabla and even vocals.

Specific days and times are allocated for various instruments and the children diligently follow classes. The Temple of Fine Arts - the sanctuary for the arts was founded by His Holiness Swami Shantanand Saraswathi. The aim is to help youth rediscover the cultural, artistic and spiritual wealth of their forefathers and to make it relevant in the present day and preserve it for posterity.



Aravinthan's daughter Suhasini was being blessed by Swami Shanthananda in the presence of Swami Rishi Thondunathan and her grand parents just before her Bharathanatyam Arangetram in USA

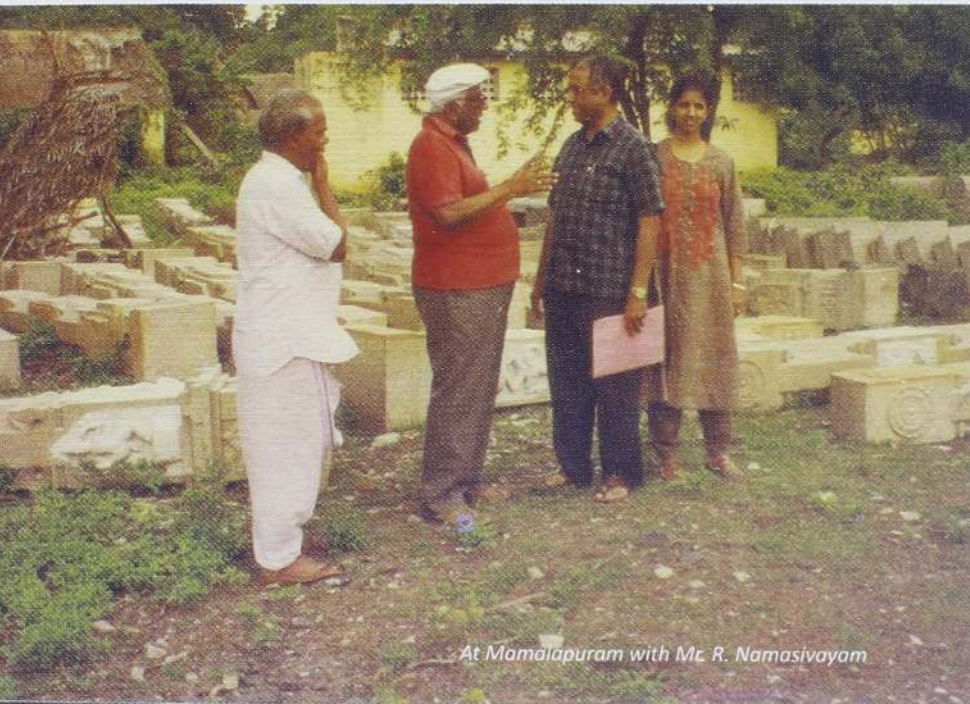
Music and dance were essential to the holistic development of a child. The Temple of Fine Arts is a place where a young child could learn music and dance from professional teachers who gave of their best to the children with his devotees, Swamiji had created centres in Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Johor Bahru, Malacca, Singapore, Perth, Chennai, Coimbatore and New Jersey over a period of 20 years.

At the Temple of Fine Arts, it is the worship of the divine that is propagated through the fine arts. The aesthetic sense in children is given a new dimension and art and music is presented simply for the love of it. The temple fosters continuity and change which improves the way of thinking of any individual in a way that is enlightening. It easily slips out of dogma by combining the traditional with the modern. The temple of Fine Arts is truly a teaching ground. It teaches one to think fearlessly due to intrinsic faith and fortitude. It lives in the present but builds a strong future based on a concrete foundation.



His revered site
His revered site
His revered site

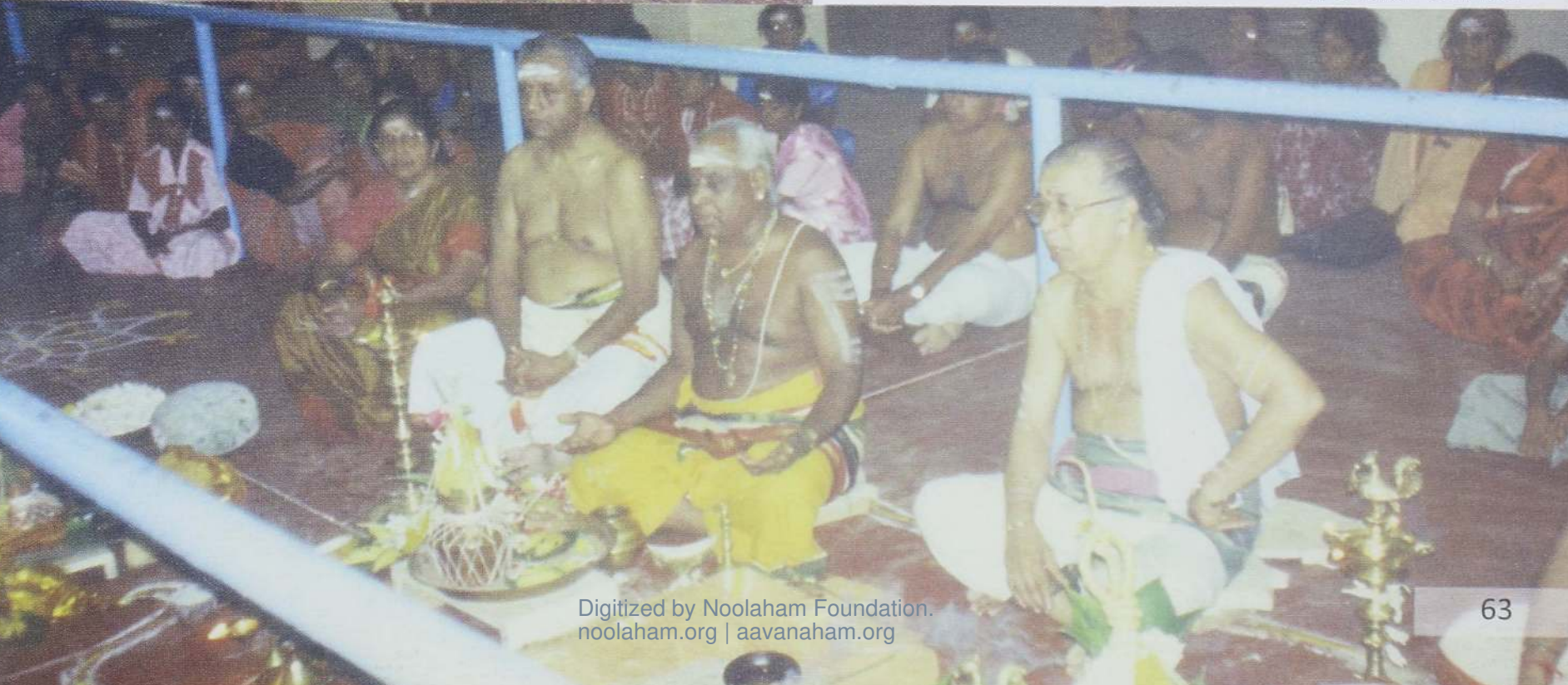
Mr. Kailasapillai is also the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society (TTRS) for several years and has taken a keen interest in that Kovil which is his revered site. Kailas and Kamala being devotees of Thiruketheeswara Peruman play significant role. According to Mr. Neelakandan (President of All Ceylon



At Mamalapuram with Mr. R. Namasivayam

Hindu Congress and Deputy President of TTRS) the unique contributions of Kailas and his wife in getting the commitment of Indian govt., to spend Rs. 320 Million to rehabilitate this temple are significant. Marble works are due to arrive in India next month. (Please see the pictures) He is also Chairman of the Manitha Neyam trust. He has established branches of the Manitha Neyam trust in the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada and Australia. It is because of his, sincerity of purpose that he was able to raise funds not only in Sri Lanka, but worldwide. Of course his financial capabilities were also an added qualification. He is also the Chairman of the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies.

at 'Sankalpam' at the Kovil



At Thiruketheeswaram



Appearance of temple after proposed restoration funded by Indian Government



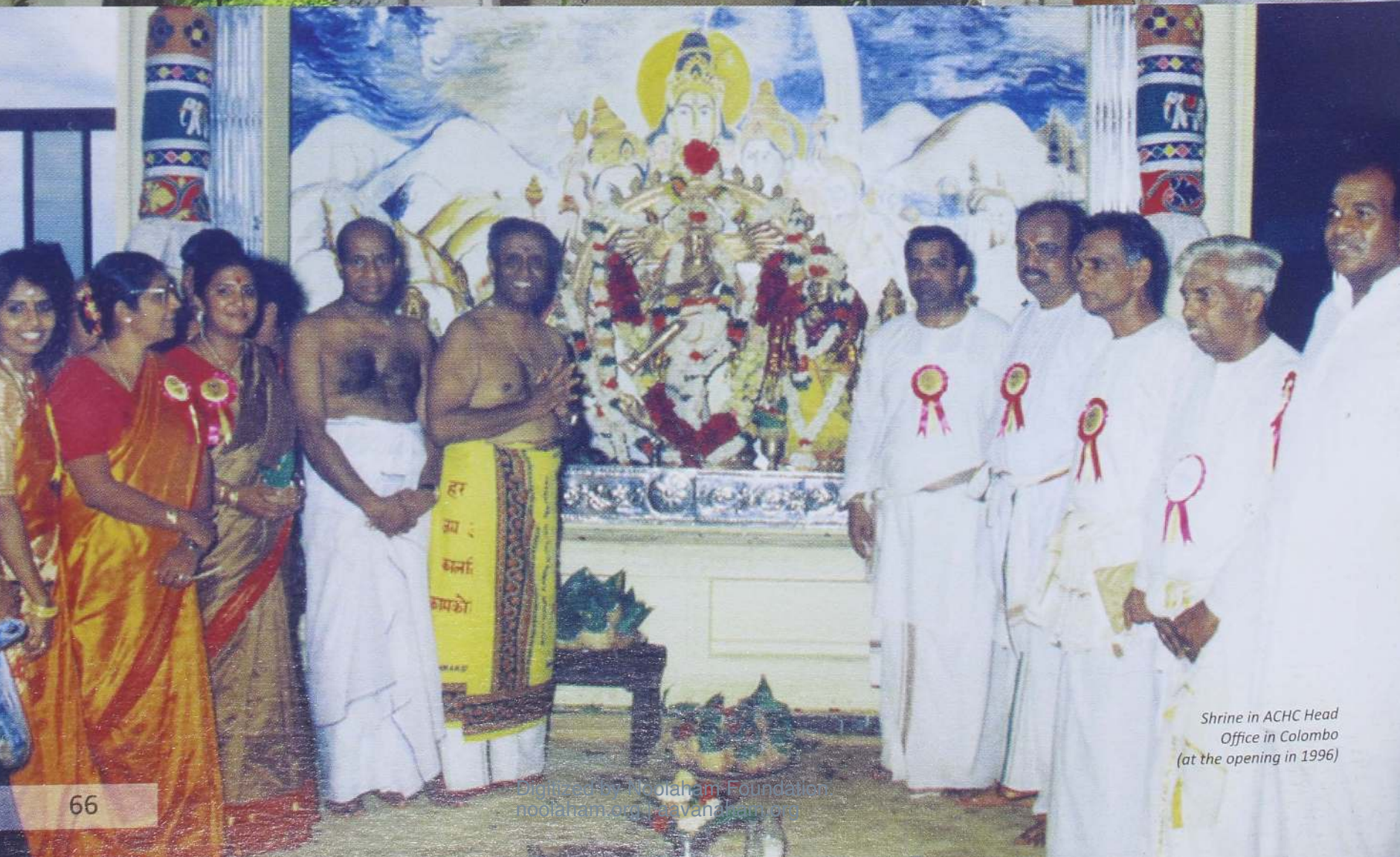


1. A beautiful stone Nandi which was installed during restoration of the Thiruketheeswaram Temple
2. The granite Maha Sivalingam which was discovered during excavations at the site of the original temple at Thiruketheeswaram
3. The ancient stone image of Ganesha which was unearthed in 1952 at the original site of the temple of Lord Shiva at Thiruketheeswaram
4. A stone sculpture of Lord Shiva as Dakshinamurty seen at the Thiruketheeswaram temple





ACHC Regional Office
in Jaffna



Shrine in ACHC Head
Office in Colombo
(at the opening in 1996)

The wind beneath the sails –

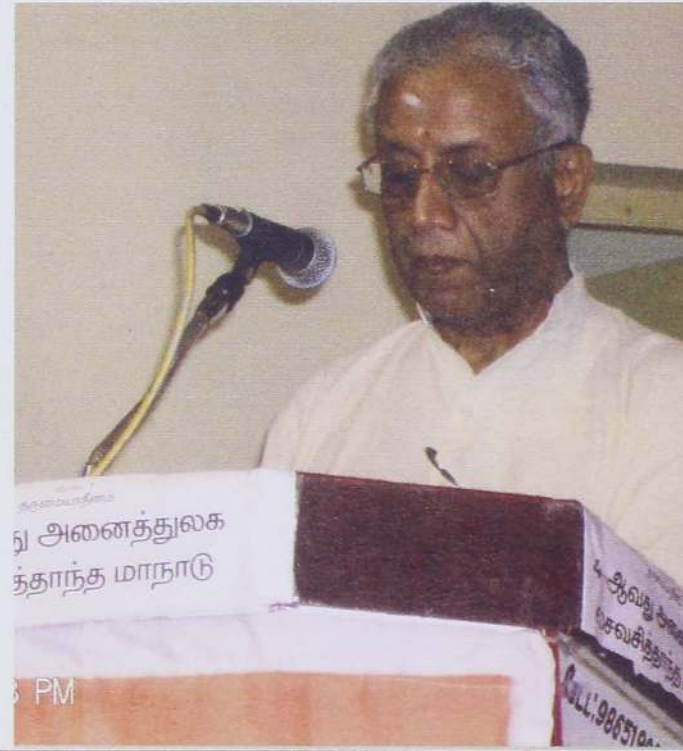
He surpasses his Predecessor

He surpasses his Predecessor

He surpasses his Predecessor

On August 2, 1992 he assumed office as President of All Ceylon Hindu Congress (ACHC) and expedited the construction work of the head office. His leadership qualities and the ability to raise funds made the task possible and of course, he always had the grace of His Almighty because he has been a sincere devotee of Lord Shiva.

At a book release to celebrate his 75th Birthday on March 29, 2009, he was conferred with the title 'MANITHA NEYA MAAMANI' (meaning 'a great human being who loves and works for the others') by the Chief Prelate of Nallur Aatheenam, Jaffna. He is truly a force to be reckoned with. The Kailasapillais begin the day with a Yoga session at their home in the mornings which we think gives them the tranquility to carry on their onerous tasks. Their well-appointed house and tranquil surroundings is indeed a soothing balm in retirement. May we have the opportunity to meet him in the future too?



Mr. V. Kailasapillai who has been involved in religious and social services was a very busy Group Deputy Chairman of John Keells Group. However, at the request of the then President of the All Ceylon Hindu Congress (ACHC) Mr. V. Balasubramaniam, Mr. Kailasapillai accepted the office of the Deputy President of ACHC despite his busy schedule. Mr. Balasubramaniam really had a vision. He told Mr. Kailasapillai that he needed the latter's support to commence the building of the ACHC Headquarters which had stagnated for several years.



A student being gifted a Laptop at Navalar Vizha at Thiruketheeswaram

Accordingly, Mr. Kailasapillai assumed duties as the Deputy President of ACHC in 1986 and like the John Keells Group, Mr. Kailasapillai was not just a deputy but a real strength to the president. The duo gave a dynamic leadership to the ACHC. Ultimately the construction work on the ACHC Headquarters started in 1990 but unfortunately Mr. Balasubramaniam passed away on 15.7.1992 and the responsibility fell on Mr. V Kailasapillai. The unanimous choice for presidency was Mr. Kailasapillai and on August 2, 1992 Mr. Kailasapillai was elected President.

The ACHC is a Federation of Hindu Religious Associations and Trusts in Sri Lanka. Therefore its Council of Management consists of delegates from various parts of the Island with divergent views.

Mr. Kandiah Neelakandan (the current President of ACHC) who was earlier the General Secretary of ACHC throughout the term of Mr. Kailasapillai's presidency observed that the confidence and trust placed in him by the Hindu community of this country was the main reason for the unity of the ACHC and also for its integrity and esteem. The very fact that Mr. Kailasapillai, the financial wizard played a key role as the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the ACHC. Mr. Neelakandan said that even after he took over the presidency, he has arranged for Mr. Kailasapillai who is the current Chairman of the Board of Trustees to chair the ACHC Finance Committee. In the words of Mr. Neelakandan, "The ACHC needs Mr. Kailasapillai's wisdom, expertise and knowledge and above all his vision which is a divine gift he possesses".



"He raised the stature of the ACHC as its leader. His Predecessors included Mr. C. C. Coomaraswamy C.C.S (who was incidently the grand father of Anushya who succeeded Kailas at John Keells), Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan C.C.S (who was a Cabinet Minister), Justice P. Sriskantdarajah, Justice V. Sivasupramaniam, Mr.S.Somasunderam (President of Inc. Law Society of Ceylon) and Mr. A. Sinnathamby (who was

Grandchildren and Appappa with Justice C. V. Wigneswaran



Diplomats at ACHC office

the General Secretary of ACHC) He surpassed his Predecessors. The Government of Sri Lanka, Foreign Embassies, Institutions and other Religious bodies recognized and continue to recognize the ACHC as the sole body representing the Hindus of this country. In other words, Mr. Kailasapillai raised the 'Voice of the Sri Lanka Hindus' to a much higher level.

Mr. Kailasapillai (jointly with his General Secretary Mr. Kandiah Neelakandan) represented the Sri Lankan Hindus at the First International Conference and Gathering of Elders held in Bombay, India from 4th to 9th February 2003 on the invitation of Viswa Hindu Prasad and presented a paper setting out the history of Hinduism and its development in Sri Lanka and on the problems faced by the Hindus of Sri Lanka.

During Mr. Kailasapillai's term of office, the six storey building of the ACHC was completed in 1996. This was possible because of the stature that Mr. Kailasapillai commanded. Mr. Neelakandan also said "I recollect the pleasant moment when we struck a deal with the Eagle Insurance Company Limited. When we (Mr. Kailasapillai and I) walked in to meet the Managing Director, Mr. Chandra Jayaratne, he (Mr. Jayaratne) rose from his seat and welcomed us, "Sir, please come in". I was taken by surprise. Only later I came to know that Mr. Jayaratne who is also a Chartered Accountant was a student of Mr. Kailasapillai. It was that meeting and relationship which enabled us to conclude a lease arrangement of the proposed building of All Ceylon Hindu Congress with a substantial advance being received to build the ACHC building.

Once the ACHC building was completed, Mr. Kailasapillai guided the ACHC through prudent investments and using money for useful projects for the welfare of needy children. Furthermore, he had a bigger vision - to extend social service beyond the barriers of religion. Hence he initiated the formation of the Manitha Neyan Trust. Its trustees included distinguished persons from the Sinhala and Muslim Communities. Through the Trust which was formed



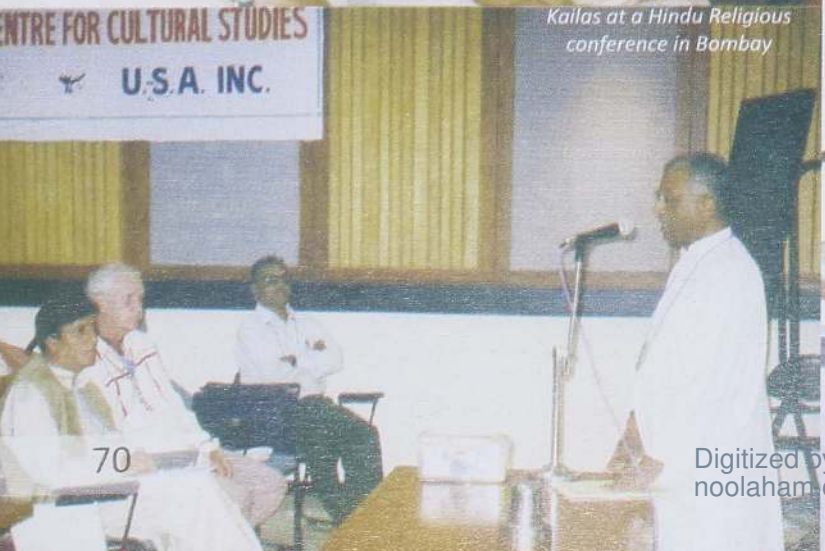
Loading refugee assistance for Tsunami Victims



Kailas at a Hindu Religious conference in Bombay



Mr. & Mrs. Kailasapillai with Mr. & Mrs. Sunil Achaya Counsellor Indian High Commission who were Chief Guests at Exhibition of Shakthi Illam Students



Kailas at a Hindu Religious conference in Bombay



Mr. & Mrs. Kailasapillai with Mr. & Mrs. Sunil Achaya Counsellor Indian High Commission who were Chief Guests at Exhibition of Shakthi Illam Students

in the UK, Canada, USA and Australia, he was able to collect monies and help a number of charities in particular those engaged in the maintenance of Children's Homes, Elder's Homes, and Mentally retarded Children's Homes.

The important projects of the ACHC which were completed under Mr. Kailasapillai's Presidency are set out in a *nutshell* as follows:

1. Construction of Jaffna Regional Office for the ACHC in Nallur
2. Relief assistance to people affected by the war and natural calamities like floods and the tsunami
3. Relief to displaced people in the North and East
4. Hostel for needy children at Colombo Hindu College Ratmalana
5. Support to several Children's Homes and Elder's Home
6. Provision of Motor Vehicle to Nallur Aatheenam
7. Construction (with the financial assistance of Hindus in London) of the new building for Nallur Aatheenam
8. Medical assistance to the needy, including a six-year-old child who had a hole in the heart and was cured with the ACHC's initiatives
9. Seminars, Conferences and Scholarships and other assistance to students.

10. Siva Thondar Ani

11. Quarterly Journal "HINDU OLI" and other publications.

Mr. Kailasapillai represented the ACHC in the Consortium of Humanitarian Organisations and was its Chairman for a few years.

He also represented ACHC in the Congress of Religious and attended several conferences and discussions for religious harmony.

On 2nd December 2012, he decided to retire from the office of the President of ACHC and proposed the election of Mr. Kandiah Neelakandan as the new President.

In an era where people are eager to hold on to offices and posts, Mr. Kailasapillai proved to be different. He is the second sitting President of the ACHC to step down from office and promote another. The first was Mr. S. Somasundram who was the President of the ACHC in March 1970 and stepped down and invited Justice V. Sivasupramaniam to take over the chair of the ACHC.

Nevertheless the ACHC did not wish to lose the benefit of the experience, knowledge and business acumen of Mr. Kailasapillai, hence the new President of the ACHC, Mr. Neelakandan persuaded Mr. Kailasapillai to stand as a tower of strength as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the ACHC and also as Chairman of the ACHC Finance Committee. To this day Mr. Kailasapillai has deep-rooted connections with the ACHC and is responsible for taking it from strength to strength.



At Mannar opening of Student Hostel



At Selva Illam



Mr Selvaratnam unvils the photoragph of Parents in law in Selva Illam

With Dr. Murugesu Kathigamanathan at Opening of Swing Centre at Mannar funded by Manitha Neyam



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noolaham.org | aavanaham.org



From ACHC Album....

at Golden Jubilee in ACHC in Jaffna (2005)



at Golden Jubilee in ACHC in Jaffna (2005)

at Golden Jubilee in ACHC in Jaffna (2005)



Mr. & Mrs. Thavayogarah felicitating Mr & Mrs. Kailasapillai



Mrs. Kailasapillai and Grand son lighting the Lamp at Childrens Birthday of

Sakthi Illam
Sakthi Illam Foundation
www.sakthiillam.org



with Mr. V. S. Thurairajah, Hon. Minister Mr. S. Thondaman, N. A. Vaithiyalingam & MRs. Jaanu Prakasam at ACHC Building

With Mr. N. A. Vaithiyalingam, Swami Aathmaganandaaji Maharaj & Hon Minister. P. P. Devaraj



receiving Saiva Prelate from Tamil Nadu at ACHC



At Mannar Fishery Harbour with Dr. Arasakone and Dr. Muttaiya Kathigamanathan after purchasing on behalf of ACHC with fund donated by Shri Kanagathurkai Amman Kovil of London

at a function at Sakthi Illam



From ACHC Album....

Ambulance donated to Jaffna from Manitha Neyam

Selva Illam



Vibulanthar illam partly funded by ACHC in Batticalo

Selva Illam



Aiyah addressing at students Hostel

Laying foundation for ACHC Building in Jaffna



amma and Children in Sakthi illam



Sivaboomi mMadam in Keerimalai with Kailasapilai Kottam (upstairs) constructed by ACHC with financial assistance of Kailas Family



From ACFC Album....



in Batavia

in Baticalo



Incolombo



Incolombo



Nithyasri recital for funding of Manitha neya PProjects



Name etched in Letters of Gold...

Name etched in Letters of Gold...

Name etched in Letters of Gold...

Quoting the Bagavad Gita which endorses that charity given without any return is the best form of charity, Mr. Kailasapillai who is the Founder Chairman of the Manitha Neyam Trust which literally means- 'love for humanity' will go down in the annals of history as being the person who has ensured that the less fortunate must be guided and assisted financially, has in no small measure etched his name in letters of gold where Danam is concerned. "The threefold divisions of Danam or charity are now being delineated by Lord Krishna. To give in charity to worthy recipients is a duty. Those who give such charity without the slightest inclination for any reciprocal return are those situated in Sattva Guna the mode of goodness. Such aspirants will offer Danam at an auspicious time such as during a solar eclipse or the holy day of Ekadasi, the 11th day preceding the new moon and the full moon.

They will offer Danam to auspicious personalities such as Vaisnava Brahmanas endowed with wisdom in knowing the conclusions of the Vedic scriptures or they will offer Danam to a temple of the supreme Lord Krishna or any of his authorized incarnations as revealed in the Vedic scriptures. These are all Danam situated in Sattva Guna. The word Patre means qualified person, it can also mean protector if analyzed from its root pa.



Who is better to protect one than the Vaisnava Brahmanas who can reveal the conclusive truths of the Vedic scriptures and save one from Samsara –the perpetual cycle of birth and death".

The Manitha Neyam Trust whose mission is to recreate a future of love, opportunity and happiness, for all those who have suffered and continue to suffer, as a consequence of man-made or natural disasters.

The Vision of the Trust is to ignite a universal passion and love for humanity that will steer future generations towards a world of peace opportunity and happiness. Anyone can see

the noble intentions of the Trust- an organised effort to help the needy and underprivileged. In this noble endeavor it has been Mr. Kailasapillai who has been in the forefront and given the guidance to the Board of Directors to carry out its services without fear or favour. Within its purview are:

The Inniya Valvu Illam – is a Home for the Deaf and Blind children set up in Mullaththivu. Sivapoomi-School for differently-abled children in Jaffna. Mahadeva Aasram in Kilinochchi. This Home accommodates 326 students, of which 179 are girls while the rest are boys. Each of these students were affected by the war which ravaged this country and it is for this reason that the Manitha Neyam Trust has come forward to help these children to enable them to live independently by educating them. The Hindu College Boys Hostel and Sakthi Illam which is a hostel for needy boys and girls in Colombo are funded by the Trust. One hundred and fifty children islandwide are taken care of at the hostel. The Sithi Vinayagar, Hindu College Hostel in Mannar caters to 95 children who have lost a single parent or both parents. Fifty three are housed in the hostel premises while the rest live with their families while their needs are taken care of by the Trust. This is where children are concerned, the Trust has not forgotten the needs of needy elders and runs an Elders Home –Sivapoomi in Jaffna. Here 52 elders are taken care of in a serene and religious environment.

Looking into the needs of the community is paramount in Mr. Kailasapillai's life and the Trust has endeavored to fulfill this obligation by providing a Nurse Assistants Training Program in collaboration with CORD and allowances were given by the Trust for the trainees. In addition those who excelled were selected for a further program thus enhancing their capabilities. Vocational Training Centre was opened in Mannar. Every year 25 students are trained in various fields to help them in self employment. To date nearly 175 students have benefited by the venture. A Health Care Training program began in July 2013 in Manipay Hospital in Jaffna. It is managed by the Institute of Medical Science and The Manitha Neyam Trust sponsors the tuition fees and takes care of lodging and food for the trainees.

University students in Jaffna and Batticaloa totaling 160 are given a monthly stipend of Rs 5000. Thus enabling these students to carry out their educational endeavors in recognition of their effort.

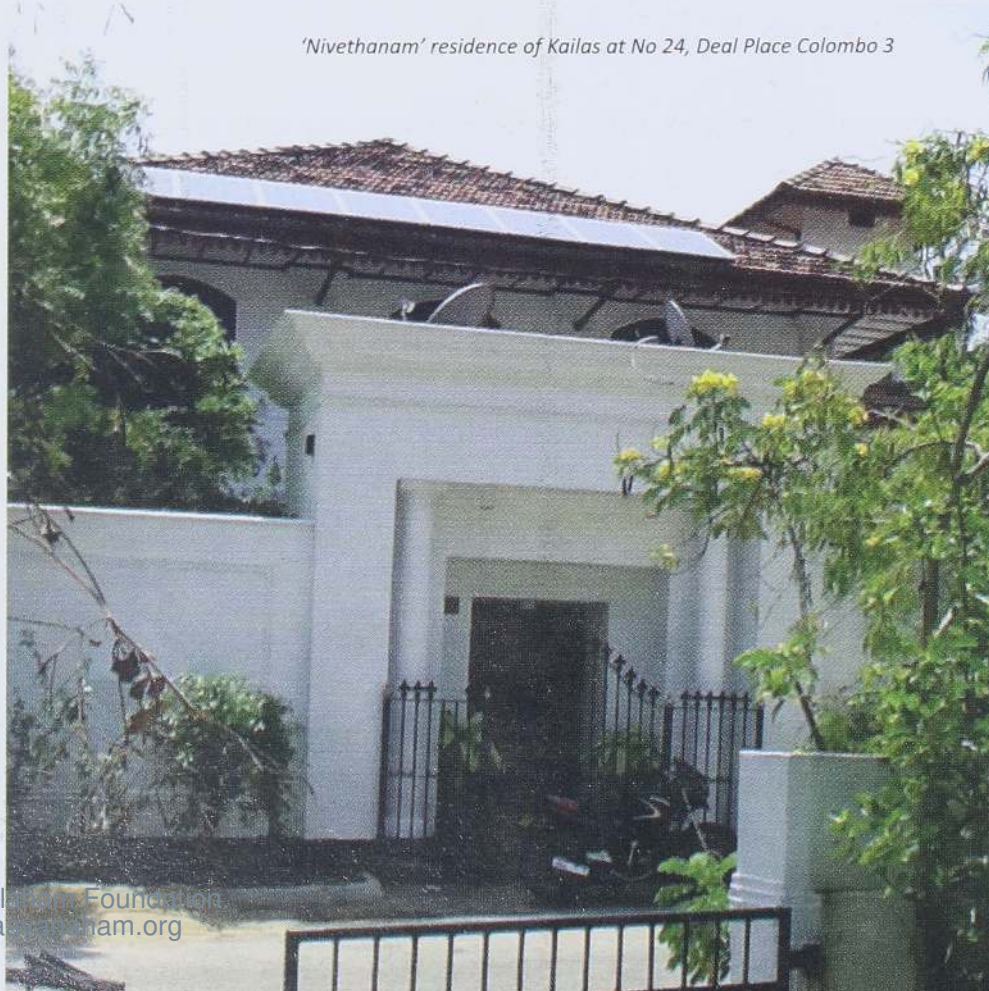
Five pre-schools have been set up in Mullaithivu to assist children to start their education by providing uniforms and a basic nutritious meal. Each school has 200 students with two teachers who are also taken care of.

There are many more projects carried out by the Manitha Neyam Trust which are too many to be mentioned – all this is being done in the name of the love for humanity.

Dr. Aru Thirumurugan had these words to add (in addition to what he has said earlier - please see pages 10 & 11):-

"When we faced severe problems in the North because of the war and the tsunami, Aiyah and

'Nivethanam' residence of Kailas at No 24, Deal Place Colombo 3



Amma always came to our rescue. It was through the All Ceylon Hindu Congress and the Manitha Neyam Trust. In the instance where disabled children had to be provided with food, they readily came forward to give them lunch through the Manitha Neyam Trust. It was heart warming when they rose to the occasion and came to our rescue when the tsunami affected our people. They rushed with relief goods, despite the difficulties to travel to the North. I can vividly recall Aiyah being full of concern and with his enigmatic smile lighting up his face, reaching out to the affected folk."

This social service Leader added:

"At any point of time when we approached them for help, Aiyah would turn to Amma, and a cheque would immediately be issued to solve the problem. Aiyah's facial expression gave the greenlight and would immediately write a cheque and he would readily sign. It is to this extent that the Kailasapillais have assisted the less fortunate. words are not enough to say the many things that they have done.. I have studied in my religion that Lord Siva blesses good people with wealth for them to do charity. I have seen this in practise in no small measure at **24 Deal Place A, Colombo 3**"

Dr Thirumurugan recalls with gratitude the numerous assistance extended by Aiyah and Amma for various charity projects implemented by him under the banner 'Siva Boomi Trust' including the Elders Homes, Children's Home and Mentally Retarded Children's school, This generous couple has facilitated not only meals and clothing for the needy but have even seen to transport and provided buses too. "As I said earlier Aiyah is an 'Aala Maram' ஆலமரம் (Banyan Tree) and the 'Aazham' ஆழம் (depth) for his love and compassion and also knowledge and experieance is like 'Nilavarai' bottomless well in Putur." (please see *Nilavarai* at page 9 of this book)

While talking to us over the phone Dr Thirumurugan was overwhelmed with the assistance provided by the Kailasapillais and his voice was full of emotion.

Although Mr. Kailasapillai lost his father when he was just 6 years. He had the benefit of the mother living until he was a youth of 20years old.

Hindu books of ethics extol the mother above every one else (as a respected Author, Pundit, Navarathnam in his book on Studies of Hinduism says) She is compared to a temple.

"There is no greater temple than the mother', says the grand old lady *Auvai* of Tamil Nad. The ideal of every woman is mother-hood. Mother's love is considered the highest form of love in human relationship.

Second to the mother, the wife occupies pride of place in the Hindu home. Abhirami filled in that position in the life of Mr. Kailasapillai in 1960. She proved to be an equal partner with man as expected of a Hindu wife. The husband is forbidden to perform any religious rite without the wife sharing in it. No priest can perform his duties unless he is married. The wife is called in the *Dharma Shastras* as *Saha Dharmini* and *Dharma Pattini*, one who shares in the performance of *Dharma*. *Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Nalayani, Arundhati, Tilagavathyar, Mangaiyarkarasiar, Karaikal Ammaiyyar, Shakuntala* are the ideal women of Hindu culture. In them the Hindu conception of wife-hood attained its highest. Their names shall remain cherished as long as the Hindu conception of a wife lasts. *Manu*, the Hindu Law giver says:

From Manitha Neyam Album





For Kailas it is a Joy to help and for the old refugee also it is a joy but, to recover



“Women must be honoured and adored by their fathers, husbands, brothers, brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare. Where women are honoured, there the gods are pleased; but where they are dishonoured, no sacred rites yield rewards.

“Where female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perishes; but the family where they are not happy ever prospers.”

The *Mahabharata* defines a wife thus:

A sweetly speaking wife is a companion,
In solitude, a father in advice,
A mother in all seasons of distress,
A rest in passing through life's wilderness

The '*Thirukkural*' describes the grandeur and noble characteristics of an ideal wife, inter alia, as follows:-

“பெண்ணிற் பெருந்தக்க யாவுள கற்பென்னுந்
திண்மையுண் டாகப் பெறின்
மனைமாட்சி இல்லாள்க ணில்லாயின் வாழ்க்கை
எனைமாட்சித் தாயினு மில்.”

When translated it means:

“What is there that is grander than woman,
when she is strong in the strength of her chastity?
All other blessings turn to nought if the
wife faileth in wifely virtues.”

The '*Araneri-Charam*' says:

“மருவிய காதல் மனையாளுந் தானும்
இருவரும் பூண்டுய்ப்பி னல்லால் - ஒருவரால்
இல்வாழ்க்கை யென்னும் இயல்புடைய வான்சகடம்
செல்லாது தெற்றிற்று நின்று.”

Translated:

The house-wife beloved, and one-self
The two together yoked,
must draw the cart; by one alone
The Chariot of domestic virtue pure
Onward rolls not, but standeth still.



It is said in 'Moothurai' by Auvayar:

“இல்லா ளகத்திருக்க இல்லாத தொன்றில்லை
இல்லாளு மில்லாளே யாமாயின் - இல்லாள்
வலிகிடந்த மாற்ற முரைக்குமே லவ்வில்
புலிகிடந்த தூறாய் விடும்”

which can be translated as follows:

“The home is truly blessed in all
Where wife obeys Duty's call;
Bare garden 'tis where gives vent,
The Shrew, to fury turbulent.”

Dr. Aruthirumurugan adds:-

“No doubt, Aiyah and Amma together yoked and drew their family 'cart' ”

In short, Hindu culture gives woman a place of absolute equality in all social and religious matters subject to the limitations of her physiological and psychological make-up.

The Hindus believe that the five great sins – *pancha-maha-pathakams* – which are prohibited and the committing of which will corrupt a man morally and spiritually are: Killing (கொலை), Theft (களவு), Intoxicants (கள்), Lust (காமம்) and Anger (கோபம்). Some texts mention disrespect and disloyalty to one's *guru* (குருநிந்தை) as the fifth. The violation





of the rules of *Varna* and *Ashrama Dharmas* will only make people lose their social or economic position, but will not convert them into sinners. The committing of any of the moral sins, will damage the moral life of an individual and retard his spiritual progress. *St. Thayumanawar* says:

கொலைகளவு கட்காமம் கோபம்விட் டாலன்றோ
மலையிலக்கா நின்னருடான் வாய்க்கும் பராபரமே.

Translation:

"Thy Grace can be won only by abandoning killing, theft, intoxicants, lust and Anger, Oh: Supreme."

"Aiyah cannot be indicted of any 'pancha-maha-pathakams." That is why "Aiyah is revered as IRAI CHIRORATNAM." He is really a Divine gem.

When undergraduates students of the University of Jaffna arrived from Vanni in mid 2009 they had no cloths to wear and other necessaries Dr. Thirumurugan recalls his contacting All Ceylon Hindu Congress and conveying to them the plight of those students. Immediately All Ceylon Hindu Congress led by Aiyah sent moneys to them through Dr. Aruthirumurgan. Each student to received Rs. 10,000 per month for a few months and there after Aiyah arranged for All Ceylon Hindu Congress and Manitha Neyam to collect funds from abroad and support these students. Further more those university students were subsequently given free Laptops and other assistance. At a ceremony held at ACHC building in Jaffna then Vice Chancellor of University of Jaffna Professor N. Shanmugalingan was full of tears when he said "My children (students of the University) would have never seen even Rs.2000 on a day but Hindu congress under the leadership of Mr. Kailasapillai sent Rs.10,000 to each child for 3months after they were rescued from Vanni war front.

Manitha Neyam is still helping other needy University Students. Dr. Aruthirumurugan appears to be satisfied having given up the public service job and dedicating his full time to religious and social service mainly because of the encouragement and support given by Aiyah and Amma. He added "Not only that they are helping young girls to learn nursing service in Jaffna and also helping young ladies in Mannar to learn sewing, they have helped me you to establish Sivaboomi Gnana Ashramam. Thus they are contributing in numerous ways to us to help the needy people in Jaffna" Kailasapillai Kottam at Sivaboomi Madam constructed by ACHC and funded by Kailas Aiyah Family is being open by Amma and Aiyah on 30th March 2014 the day before Aiyahs Birthday. Further more 10 rooms and a Hall have been constructed there (in the downstairs) by ACHC on Sivaboomi property in terms of an agreement reached with the Trust. 7 of those rooms are sponsored by 7 Hindu families. One of the room is sponsored by Kailas's cousin Ammaiappar family in memory of Late Mr. Arunasalam Chellappa, God father of Kailas and his brother Ambalavaner. Of course Mr. Chellappah is held in reverence by Kailas and Kamala and all their cousins.

"The service of Kailas Family to the younger generation is unique. He is a gift by Lord Shiva to the Hindus and his Country. Aum.... Aum..." This is the message of blessings always repeated by 'Aanmeekasudar' Rishi Thondunathan Swami

Always in the spirit of service...

Always in the spirit of service...

Always in the spirit of service...

Rev. Rishi Thondunathan, (called 'Aanmeekachchudar' with lots of love and divine by his followers) who is a disciple of Gurudeva Sivaya Subramuniaswami of Hawaii Saiva Adheenam in USA, was here on his annual trip to Sri Lanka.

When he was asked about Mr. V. Kailasapillai his first reaction was, "He is a real Manitha Nayar." As mentioned elsewhere, Mr. Kailasapillai has been given the title "Manitha Neya Maamani" which means "A Great Gem of Humanitarian Service." Rishi Thondunathan said that his guru, Sivaya Subramuniya Swami, was a disciple of Siva Yoga Swami, a well-known Saint who lived in Jaffna until 1964. According to Rishi, Mr. Kailasapillai is the embodiment of the often-quoted Four Great Sayings of Siva Yoga Swami which are:



"Oru Pollapumillai (ஒரு பொல்லாப்பும் இல்லை): "There is not even one wrong thing"
"Muzhuvathum Unmai (முழுவதும் உண்மை): "All is truth"
"Eppavo mudintha kaariyam (எப்பவோ முடிந்த காரியம்): "It was all accomplished long ago"
"Naam Ariyom (நாம் அறிவோம்): "We do not know"

Elaborating, Rishi Thondunathan pointed out that Mr. Kailasapillai never had "mensrea" (guilty mind) and therefore to him there is not even one wrong thing. He is always truthful and honest. He believes that all who deal with him also speak truth and is never reluctant to believe them. When we turned to Mr. Kailasapillai and asked him whether the others would not "take him for a ride" if he believed everyone, his simple answer in his calm voice was: "If they are not truthful, they will not have the Divine Blessings." Such a statement is typical of him. He did not think or even suggest that His Almighty would penalize them. As Rishi noted, Mr. Kailasapillai humbly accepts life as it is. Fortunately, he has been climbing up the ladder in his own life. . His lack of worldly ambition and greed for power, leads Rishi to observe that "for this gentleman it was all accomplished long ago" as Yoga Swami preached. Another unique quality of Mr. Kailasapillai is that he does not boast that he has knowledge, yet he is highly acclaimed by others as a Financial Wizard. Nevertheless, he is humble to pretend -- or rather to accept -- that he does not know everything. Rishi said that this humility reminded him of another Great Saying of Yogar Swami: "We do not know."

Incidentally the 50th Guru Pooja of that great saint Yoga Swami falls on 10th April 2014 - 10 days after the 80th Birthday of Mr. Kailasapillai.

Rishi recalls that he met Mr. and Mrs. Kailasapillai about 12 years ago for the first time when they came to Hawaii Adheenam in USA. He has been close to the Kailasapillai family for the last five years and whenever he visits Sri Lanka on his annual trip he enjoys the opportunity to meet and work with Mr. and Mrs. Kailasapillai because of the latter's involvement in humanitarian work.



Always lighting lamps and dispelling the darkness

To put it simply, Rishi said Kailasapillai Aiyah is “NiraiKudam” (meaning a Full Pot which never tumbles) because of his spiritual, moral and cultural values which have enabled him to become a successful professional and a beloved family head. He adds, “What our younger generation should learn from this gentleman is that one’s cultured life can make him a successful professional and community leader. With one hand, he holds onto the world and with the other hand he holds onto God.”

Rishi noted, “According to our religion, there are four stages in one’s life. He has now reached the fourth stage of Sannyasi.”

“During the last five years what greatly impressed me was his readiness to give to others and help them. Whenever anyone suggests or asks for help he extends his hand readily. “I was at Keerimalai last year when Sivapoomi Madham was being extended. Mr. and Mrs. Kailasapillai came forward to fund the upper floor of the building.” Rishi continues, “In America, Manitha Neyam Trust founded by Kailasapillai Aiyah is held in high esteem among the diaspora. It was the first Sri Lankan NGO came to hear about when Tsunami relief was desperately needed in Sri Lanka. His brand as a “Financial Wizard” earned the confidence and credibility for Manitha Neyam Trust. ManithaNeyam is Kailasapillai Aiyah. Kailasapillai Aiyah is Manitha Neyam. The two are inseparable.

He added, “Whenever I come to Colombo, I consider it a privilege to visit the Children’s Home, “Sakthi Illam,” at Colombo Hindu College in Ratmalana. About 150 children there love Kailasapillai Aiyah and Amma as their parents. Really, they are performing worship to His Almighty there. We believe that service to mankind is service to His Almighty.” When saying that, this Holy man was also emotional. He adds that “the Kailasapillais are daily remembered not only in Sakthillam but in several other Children’s Homes, Elders Homes and Disabled Children’s Homes and even in Universities because their hearts pour out for them.” Rishi concludes; “Even at this age, Aiyah is not reluctant to travel to Jaffna and Thirukeetheswaran by road and that reflects his will power and spirit of service.

May God continue to bless Kailasapillai Aiyah and his family to continue their noble service to humanity”.

Receiving Hon. V. Mahalingam Consul General for India in Jaffna for Navalur Vizha



From Manitha Neyam Album



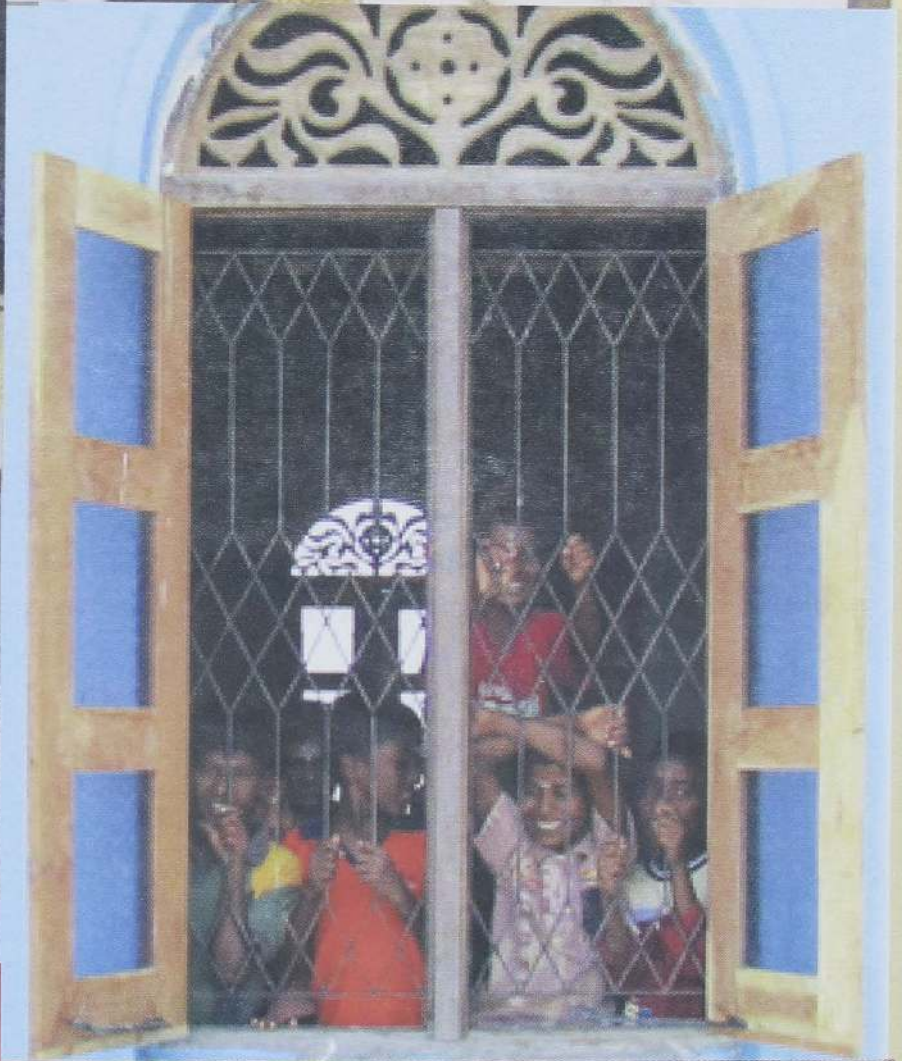
From Manitha Neyam Album



From Manitha Neyam Album



From Manitha Neyam Album



Contribution to unity and peace

Contribution to unity and peace

Contribution to unity and peace

Mr. Kailasapillai who is hailed as a fatherly figure of the Sri Lankan Tamil Community, had no political affiliations. Nevertheless when the community needed his help he was ready to render assistance at any point of time- a quality Mr Kailasapillai is endowed with. A well-known journalist had written about Tamil politics as follows:

The other parallel course of action was the well-meaning efforts of some Colombo-based prominent Tamils to bring about overall Tamil unity. These Tamils comprised leading businessmen, professionals and social workers. Some of them were involved in discussions with counterparts in Batticaloa striving for unity. The efforts of these 'Colombo'-based Tamils also played a major role in unity talks.

A working agreement among the TULF, ACTC, EPRLF and TELO was reached to form a coalition as the 'Thamizh Thesieeya Kootamaippu' or Tamil National Alliance. The TNA would contest under the TULF symbol of the sun. A scheme apportioning candidates to each party in the different electoral districts was also agreed upon. The formation of the Tamil National Alliance was announced through a press communiqué dated October 22nd 2001.

The press communiqué issued on October 22nd 2001 heralding the formation of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) was signed by four persons representing the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) All Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC) Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) and Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF).

They were R. Sampanthan (TULF), N. Kumarakuruparan (ACTC) N. Srikantha (TELO) and K. Premachandran (EPRLF). The press statement had four salient points that more or less amounted to an "article of association" for the Tamil National Alliance.

The facilitator panel or "Anusaranaialar Kuzhu" comprised the following six members:

1. V. Kailasapillai
2. Kandiah Neelakandan
3. V.R. Vadivetkarasan
4. Nimalan Karthikeyan
5. S. Thiyagarajah
6. K. Jeybalasingham

The facilitators were respected members of the Tamil community primarily based in Colombo. They were mainly professionals or successful commercial entrepreneurs. With the exception of Thiyagarajah who was then the treasurer of the TULF they did not belong to any political party. Although Mr V. Kailasapillai always towed an apolitical course, he was all for unity in the Tamil community and this was his classic contribution towards this end.



Mr Kailasapillai and his wife who stands as his 'Sakthi' in a real sense have been of towers of strength to a number of cultural social and religious institutions in Colombo and other parts of Sri Lanka

They are like Dr Aru Thirumurugan said, banyan tree giving shade/cover to numerous institutions and people above all barriers. For an example, Crippled Children Aid Association is supported by them.

Colombo Vivekananda Society is also institution supported by them. Mr Kailasapillai was its President; he is now one of its Patrons. A large **statue of Swami Vivekananda** by the side of Colombo Vivekananda Society was erected by All Ceylon Hindu Congress under Mr. Kailasapillai's presidentship to commemorate 100 years of Swami Vivekananda addressing the World Congress of Religions in Chicago and visit to Sri Lanka.



Kailas receives Hon. Ranil Wickramasinghe at a function of Crippled Children Aid Association of Sri Lanka

They have been helping Colombo Tamil Sangam, **Sir Pon. Arunachalam Trust** and Colombo Kamban Kalzham who promote Tamil cultural activities and programme of Sri Lanka. When we spoke to Dr Muthiah Kathirgamanathan who had been the President of Colombo Tamil Sangam and who is now the General Secretary of ACHC, he puts it in nutshell "Aiyah and Amma generously assist our cultural and religious activities because of their large heartedness and what they give they do it quietly. What right hand does is not known to the left hand". The famous Tamil speaker on Tamil literary platforms globally and the founding father of Kamban Kalzham Kambavarathy E. Jeyaraj mentioned that their Kalzham honours the distinguished persons of great calibre annually as 'Saantors' and that both Mr and Mrs Kailasapillai have been so honoured (of course in different years) but the unique thing about them in that they are the only couple to receive such honour. He added : "they are like "Artha Naareeswarar"(Hindus see Lord Siva And Parvathy Ambaal in an



Statue of Swami Vivekananda



Sir Pon Arunachalam Day



unified one form of Aarta Naareeswarar). He quipped “Aiyah’s parents must have believed that they had been blessed with a child from Kailaasam”

Colombo Hindu Colleges in Bambalapitya and Ratmalana were founded by Hindu Educational Society established by 24 Hindu Community leaders in 1951. Although those schools were taken over by the Government in 1962, those were continued to be nurtured by the Hindu Community even thereafter. Mr Kailasapillai and his wife Abhirami who is fondly called “Kamala” were among them. They were once active members of the School Development Society, according to Mr. T. Sangaralingam who was once a popular Principal of Hindu College Colombo in Bambalapitya. Mr Sangaralingam who spends his retirement in London and whose son Mithran (a school days friend of Aravinthan) are actively involved in Manitha Neyam Trust (UK) also told us :“it is the untarnished name and credibility of Kailas and Kamala help us to raise funds in UK; they are not politically aligned which is another important factor”

Does Kailas whispers? “Kamala, I am tired of all these.....”

The soft spoken Mr V. Kandasamy a retired Deputy Auditor General who is associated with Hindu Educational Society, Colombo Tamil Sangam and All Ceylon Hindu Congress in various capacities says with his usual quite smile; “Aiyah is a real financial wizard, he is never reluctant to give us his guidance in financial management .One more special thing is whenever we need donations first to come to our rescue is always Kailasapillai Aiyah family”

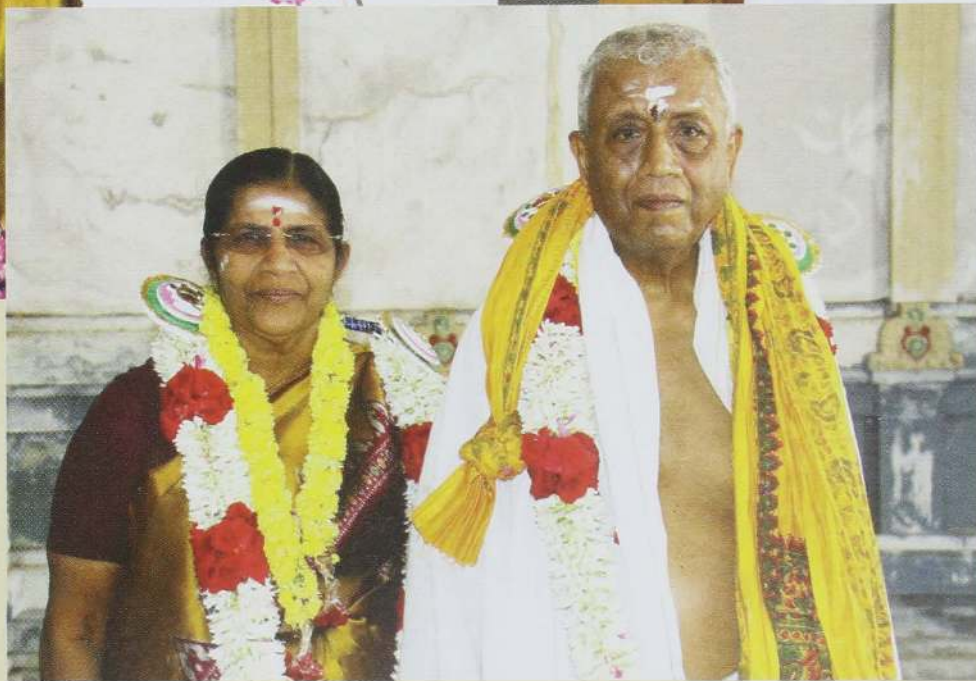
Colombo Hindu College Bambalapity



From 75th Birthday Album



Sathabishekam on 18th March 2014



When Kailas and Kamala were blessed at Thirukkadayur in Tamil Nadu, India



"Aththan, how was Sathabishekam?" Brother-in-law / Cousin Kumarasamy is asking Mr. Kailasapillai who in passive mood after a journey (seated by the side of photograph of His Father Mr. Viswanathar)

Thank You All...

We on behalf of the Organizing Committee profusely thank all those who have contributed in numerous ways in production and publication of this coffee table book and in particular

❧ *Ms. Fahima Fariz and Mr. Ananth Palakidnar (two senior Journalists) for editing this book.*

and

❧ *Unie Arts (Pvt) Ltd and its proprietor Mr. Pon. Vimalendran and his daughters Elakshinnia and Aranya for a splendid job done at a short notice.*

As the Editors say, the organizing committee also hope, that this book would help the younger generation to get an insight into the life and times of a great man, who worked tirelessly to bring glory to an institution that stood out among the rest. This book must be preserved for posterity.

Read on and enjoy the book which could, as stated by the Editors, we the first of this kind.

**Kandiah Neelakandan
Anushya Coomaraswamy**

Coordinators of the Organizing Committee

Email: neela@mnlaw.lk

31st March 2014

ERRATA

As the printing of this book was done at a short notice a few printing errors have occurred. Please therefore note the following corrections. Inconvenience caused in this connection is regretted.

Pg	Para	Line	Error	Correction
4	-	8	Accounting	Mathematics
5	(Title to second Photo)	-	Sankar	Sampanthar
12	Caption	-	Alma matar	Alma mater
14	2	3 (7 th word)	mother	father
14	2	3 (18 th word)	father	mother
14	2	4	father	mother
18	-	11	assesting	assisting
29	Caption	-	A son-in-laws saga	A son-in-law's sage
31	Last	Penultimate	Maths	Mathematics and Accounts
36	Addition of a missing paragraph	End of the page	Missing paragraph	Pages 34 to 36 – what sister-in-law Sivakamy Ambalavanar (wife of the only brother) had to say:- “He is a great man who is a tower of strength to all of us. Kamala Akka is the ideal lady behind him. We are what we are today is due to both of them. Our children Kumaran and Anuradha qualified in engineering through the tremendous support received from Kailas Aththan and Kamala Akka”
37	(Title to Photo)	-	Sanker	Sampanthar
44	1	1	President Chairmen	Present Chairman
74	Title to second Photo (left)	2	fundeed by ACHC in Batticalo	funded by the ACHC in Batticaloa
74	Title to third Photo	3	students hostal	the students' hostel
75	Title to Photo	-	mMadam	madam
76	Title to Photo at top right	-	In Baticalo	In Batticaloa
79	5	1	6	3
79	5	2	20	18
85	3	4	அறிவேயாம்	அறிவேயாம்
95	Title to Photo at bottom right	-	In passive	is in sombre
96	Last page	2	we	be



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