

# A Report on the Coimbatore Vizha Program 2008 – 2009

Celebrating the Spirit of our City  
3<sup>rd</sup> January 2009 to 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Coimbatore is a confluence of cultures and is a place that is truly unique in the nation, known for its spirit of enterprise and culture. It is a city that has made us all and one that we passionately continue enhancing in various ways. In this fast changing world, it is important to preserve many aspects of our culture or features that we term "Coimbatoreness". In other words we have to preserve the best of our past to make a great Coimbatore for the future.

This city has many features that are unique to the region like its heritage, industrial legacy, entrepreneurial spirit, hospitable and honest culture, the multi cultural-ethnic confluence, Kongu language, the Noyyal River, the pleasant climate and the sweet Siruvani drinking water etc. Coimbatore is a culture that is to be experienced. Coimbatore Vizha was an effort to celebrate all these aspects of the city. It is the Flagship event facilitated by the Young Indians, CII, Coimbatore Chapter

Our Vizha brought together several organizations that have over the years and decades added to the experience or spirit of the city organizing a series of events over a span of nine days in which around three hundred thousand people experienced Coimbatore.

## Orumai Payanam

### A Multi - Faith Journey for Peace, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2009

How many of us hasn't heard the claim that "religion leads to warfare?" all of us are familiar with sweeping military campaigns in the Middle East and North Africa in the name of Islam. In the name of Christ, Crusaders marched to take back land that was previously under Christendom. In 16th and 17th century Europe (1550-1650), wars between Protestant and Catholic rulers brought much bloodshed. There have been czarist pogroms against the Jews - often with religious justification. In India, we've seen Hindus and Muslims fighting one another. Buddhists and Hindus have



been fighting in Sri Lanka for ages. Many innocent lives are lost in these wars. An end has to be put to all of this and it's our duty to the future generation to teach them and make them accept and respect other religions. Keeping this in mind Orumai Payanam a multi faith Journey for peace and unity marked the launch of Coimbatore Vizha. Over 120 children representing 30 schools from within and from the outskirts of Coimbatore undertook a journey for unity. The objective of the event was to allow children to visit places of worship and learn to appreciate the religious harmony and unity of people in Coimbatore. Members of Young Indians, voluntary organisations such as Shanti Ashram, and religious leaders accompanied them. They visited Koni Amman Temple, St. Michael's Church, Flower Market Mosque, Jain Temple and Gurudwara Singh Sabha. **Dr B K Krishnaraj Vanavarayar**, Chairman Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Coimbatore Kendra, inaugurated the programme. He said Coimbatore, as a city, had a message to offer of co-operation and constructive development.

## Exhibitions

### Tour of GD Museum, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009



**Mr G D Naidu** a leading industrialist played a major role in developing the city of Coimbatore to its present state. He is credited with the manufacture of the first electric motor in India. His contributions were primarily industrial but also span the fields of electrical, mechanical, agricultural (Hybrid cultivation) and automobile engineering. He established training institutions for automobile and electronic technicians. He also established an Industrial Exhibition in Coimbatore containing a personal collection of wire records, tape records, printers, computers, radios, ancient calculators, pens, telephone, tools, the original voice of Thomas Alwa Edison etc. This marvelous and knowledgeable museum was kept open to the public on all days as a token of support to the Coimbatore Vizha.

### Important Visitors since 1921, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009

As part of the Vizha; Goethe – Zentrum promoted by CIGCA coordinated with G D Naidu Charities and conducted a Photo Exhibition of the visit of various important visitors to Coimbatore since 1921 and the different collaborations and associations which evolved from these visits at EVR hall in GeDee premises. Photographs of eminent personalities such as Periyar E V Ramasamy, Dr Karunanidhi, Dr Ambedkar, Sir C V Raman and many more were displayed to make the public aware of how Coimbatore was considered as an important City even in those periods.



### Vintage Car Display, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009



Vintage cars are always looked upon as beauties. They give us an insight to the fashion, taste and technologies of cars of the past. A vintage car display was set up at the EVR Hall as part of Coimbatore Vizha for viewing by the public. The display had cars like VW Beetle – the most sold car in the world, Morris Minor that sold a record of 1.6 million cars, Rolls – Royce, Mini Minor, A wooden charcoal bus of 1940's vintage which was run by GD Naidu on the Kovai - Udumalai - Palani route, A caravan used by EVR Periyar to travel all over South India etc. These vintage beauties enthralled the onlookers.

### Timeless Facades, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Coimbatore as a city is fast progressing into the future, with change being the only constant factor. In this path of progress some aspects of the landscape bear the brunt and one most significant aspect that gets endangered is Heritage or period buildings. Our city too has lost some quaint and beautiful structures in the recent past due to the fierce real-estate boom. These heritage structures are not just houses or buildings, they are relics of the past that link us to our roots and also they are structures that tell the story of a city. The Vanavarayar Foundation in an attempt to bring awareness towards these buildings presented an exhibition of over 40 sketches at Sanmarga Sangamam, R S Puram, Coimbatore. These paintings represented significant simple heritage structures of Coimbatore. The young and budding artists Solomon and Rajesh from Chennai had worked over a year on these beautiful creations and it was for sure a visual treat.



### Sport

#### Run for Coimbatore – Mini Marathon, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Marathon is a very popular sport now. People run for various reasons like social causes or for the fun of running, to prove to oneself or others that they are capable of completing a painful task or just to show their participation in a particular cause. As part of Coimbatore Vizha, a mini marathon “Run for Coimbatore” was organised with the support of Kovai Athletic Club. **Mr V Panchatcharam**, Assistant Commissioner Traffic – East and **Mr Shankar Vanavarayar**, Chair, Coimbatore Vizha & Chief Executive, Sakthi Textiles, flagged off the marathon. The marathon, which started at Nehru Stadium, had over 2,000 participants including college students, professionals and business personalities. The men had to run 10 km. **Mr A C A Theodore**, Regional Assistant Director, Tamil Nadu Sports Development Corporation, gave away the prizes to A Venkatesh Raj, Kovai Athletic Club, T Raj, Athletic Foundation and P Boopathi Kumar, Athletic Foundation, the winners in the men’s category. The women were required to run 5 km. **Mr S Srinivasan**, Secretary, Kovai Athletic Club, gave away the prizes to the winners, S Padmavathi, Usha Nandini and Syndhya Mari Marasrat. The boys had to run 5 km. **Mr Giri**, Programme Head, Hello FM, gave away the prizes to R Vijayan from Government Higher Secondary School, Madukarai, P Karthi, from Kovai Athletic Club and V Arulprakash from the Government Higher Secondary School, Solayur, Anaikkatti. **Mr Rohit Rajendran**, Chair, Young Indians and Executive Director, Premier Spinning and Weaving Mills, gave away the prizes to the winners in the girls category – P Dhana Priya from Chatrapathy Shivaji Sports Club, P Siva Ranjani from Mariammal Girls School, Pollachi and T Kiruthika, Mariammal Girls School, Pollachi. The girls had to run 3 km. **Mr Dipendar Singh**, Proprietor, Popular Automobiles, thanked the participants.



### Inter College Cricket Matches, 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Cricket is a sport that captures the interest of people from different walks of life in India from the gullies and street corners to the sophisticated locations. Coimbatore had the opportunity of watching budding talents swing their bats to the fiery bowling in the Twenty 20 Inter Collegiate Cricket Tournament that was held during the Vizha. The best fourteen college teams competed against each other for the cup in the matches held over the four days in the PSG Tech, PSG Medical and SNR grounds. The finals were held on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009 in PSG Tech grounds. The champion title was won by PSG College of Arts & Science team followed by Bharathiar University team in 2<sup>nd</sup> place; the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place was taken by the teams from VLB Janakiammal College of Engineering & Technology and Dr Mahalingam College of Engineering & Technology. **Mr B Balamurugan**, Coimbatore Passport Officer, **Prof K Natarajan**, Mechanical Engineering, PSG College Of Technology gave away the prizes to the winners.



### Brands of Coimbatore - Treasure Hunt, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Treasure hunts are a fun way to unravel mysteries. It's a game where the quick-witted gain knowledge while aiming to win the prize. The knowledge of Coimbatore about their hometown was put to test in the Treasure Hunt organized as a part of Coimbatore Vizha, with the theme "The brands of Coimbatore". The starting point for the Treasure Hunt was Atmos, Race Course. **Mr Shankar Vanavarayar**, Event Chair, Coimbatore Vizha & Chief Executive, Sakthi Textiles flagged off the first car.

The hunt had 3 legs with 5 puzzles to be solved and one clue to move to the next level. The checkpoints were at 3 different museums in Coimbatore – Forest College Museum, Gandhi Museum and G D Naidu Museum. A total of 30 teams comprising of 4 members per team participated.

The winners were Annush Ramaswamy & Team, Prasanna Krishna & Team, Aravind Selvapathy & Team and Dhiya & Team. The Treasure hunt was organized by Young Indians & was led by **Mr H Vijayanth**, Member -

Young Indians & Proprietor, Hashmee Enterprises, **Mr Rajeev Kamineni**, Member - Young Indians & Director, Oxford Book Store and friends.



## Music & Dance

### Dawn of a New Era – Western classical music Concert, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009



The Encyclopedia Britannica defines song as the joint art of words and music, two arts under emotional pressure coalescing into a third. Coimbatoreans were given an opportunity to feel this coalescence through the performance that was given by **Mr Darryl Atkinson**, Director, Adonai Academy of Fine Arts, his fellow musicians and students of Adonai Academy of Fine Arts one of the best schools of Western Classical Music at the Coimbatore Club. **Mr Nikhil Sunil**, Member - Young Indians & Director, APM United Group gave the welcome address to the gathering. This particular musical performance was dedicated to Coimbatore to showcase the art of the city. The crowd of enthusiastic listeners were treated to an evening of

different pieces of music like The second star to the right from Peter Pan, If I Were a Rich Man and Sunrise, Sunset from Fiddler on the Roof, Getting to Know You from The King and I, Edelweiss from The Sound of Music, La Cucaracha, La ti do Re etc.

### Piano Concert – Kongu Kavimaalai, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009

The evening as the name Kongu Kavimaalai itself suggests was filled with music from the piano and the ganjira in unison with smooth singing of poems about the Kongu region. It truly was a fantastic treat to the ears. **Mr. Anil Srinivasan** a veteran pianist from Chennai who has carved himself a niche in the Chennai Sangamam along with **Mr Purushottaman** on the ganjira and **Mr Swarna Rethas**, Vocal entertained the eager audience comprising mostly of children with their music and story narration. The event took place in Vivekalaya Matriculation HSS. **Mr Arvind Kumar Shankar**, Member - Young Indians & Director, Aravind Constructions gave the closing remarks.





## Marudhamalai Kuravanji, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009

The students of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan enthralled the audience through a light and sound dance drama that took place in the school auditorium. The drama in an entertaining but thought provoking manner had the musical narration of two students dressed as kuravars from the Marudhamalai hills telling the audience about the important people and institutions who made a major contribution to the development of this wonderful city. They put forward reasons as to how our city is better than the foreign countries and questioned why anybody would want to leave the city and go abroad. They emphasized the importance of giving

back something to the society that has taught and given us a lot. **Dr B K Krishnaraj Vanavarayar**, Chairman Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Coimbatore Kendra felicitated the event.

## Inter Faith Bhajans by the Noyyal, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009

The morning of the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009 witnessed the gathering of Coimbatorens along the banks of the river Noyyal in Perur Padithurai to sing Bhajans in unison for the prosperity of Coimbatore. Around twenty-five people from Shivanjali-The Temple of Fine Arts sat in front of the shrine of Mahathma Gandhi, Jayaprakash Narayan and Kamaraj and joined their voices to sing a number of songs. The flowing music acted as a crowd puller and the place started to over flow with listeners. This experience was truly divine.



## Concert Of Music of Yanni & Classical Dance, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Coimbatore Vizha gave the people of the city an opportunity to witness a "Concert of Music by Yanni" and "Classical Dance" which was organized by Shivanjali and Bakthi Natiya Nikethan at Stanes School, Coimbatore. **Mr Prakash Babu**, Principal, Stanes Anglo Indian Higher Secondary School gave the welcome address. The young budding talents of Temple of Fine Arts reproduced Yanni's famous western classical compositions and presented it to the audience. Some of the famous compositions were Santorini, Nostalgia, Acroyali, Desire, Marching Season etc. Following the music concert, students of Bhakthi Natiya Nikethan and Shivanjali presented the classical bharatanatyam dance. The effect of the music and dance was truly magical.



### **Thirukalyana Vhaibavam, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

Coimbatorens got the chance to know about the wedding stories of different Hindu Gods. Aradhana School of dance gave them the opportunity to witness the marriage of Lord Murugar to Goddess Valli, Lord Shiva to goddess Parvathi and Lord Rama to Goddess Sita through their Dance Drama that took place in Nani Palkhival Auditorium, Mani Higher Secondary School. The stories of all the weddings were portrayed in a colourful and vibrant manner.



### **Performance by Differently Abled Children, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009**



Coimbatore Vizha witnessed one of its kind programmes, which had the Dance performance by differently abled children at the GeDee Auditorium. Around thirty-five children performed before an enthusiastic and motivating audience. This event was made possible by the effort taken by **Ms C Jasmine**, District Disabled Rehabilitation Officer who brought these children together for the performance. The children putting aside their disability danced happily to the tunes of different movie songs. Any onlooker would take them to be perfectly normal children. They proved wrong all those doubters who had the opinion that they are children of a lesser God.

### **Contests**

#### **Articulate Kovai – Elocution Competition, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

One of the best and powerful way of expressing any feeling or thought is through words. Keeping this in mind Articulate Kovai, an Oratory Competition was conducted for the school children on the topic Coimbatore and its glorious past and Coimbatore – my dream and emerging India's Cosmopolis. **Mrs Gayathri** and **Mr Prakash**, joint Secretary Shivanjali temple of fine Arts coordinated the event at Shivanjali.

**Mr Vijayendra Rao**, Coordinator, Shivanjali temple of fine arts and **Mrs Rajeshwari**, retired Principal, Teachers Training College, Coimbatore were the judges present during the competition. The prizewinners for the category - Coimbatore and its glorious past are Mr Vignesh, Vidya Vikasini, Keerthana John, Bharathi Vidya Bhavan and Pattathartasan, KMGIT Kaliapuram and for Coimbatore – my dream and emerging India's Cosmopolis is Mr Gaurav Bhattacharya, Vidhya Niketan, Subashini, Kikani Matric Hr Sec School and Indumathi, Krishnammal Hr Sec School.

### Painting Competition, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009

The School and College students of Coimbatore got an opportunity to express their view about Coimbatore on canvas in the painting competition that was held during the week of Coimbatore Vizha at all Lalit Kalakshetra centers. Topics for the competition were My Coimbatore for School students and Man Made Wonders of Coimbatore for College students. The student's paintings brought out their inner vision and aspirations for the Coimbatore region. The participants were divided into four different categories based on their age group. The 1st prizewinners of each Category are S Harish, Anushka Sandeep, Heera Shree R, and Pragadheesh Raj S. the best painting in college participants was won by Arikaran R.

### Digital Design Contest, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009

A Design contest was held as one of the events under Coimbatore Vizha. The Event was aimed to get designs from participants for a logo, T-shirt, bumper sticker and cap. All the designs were accepted with respect to spirit and heritage of Coimbatore. The entire event was conducted online. Mr. Stalin, Photographer cum graphic designer, Chennai and Mr Raghuram Designer cum architect, Chennai acted as online judges. Of the 100 entries that came in top four designs were selected. The winners were Imathiaz Mehboob Sheriff, C S Madhu, K Vijayakumar; R Nandha Kumar .The prize distribution ceremony was conducted at GD Naidu hall on 11th January. Designers gave the ownership of awarded designs to organizing committee of Vizha.

### Photography Contest, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Photos help to freeze moments in time; they are one of the best ways to record a past. IAB, Photo Centre and Savithri Photo House joined hands to conduct a Photography Competition for the people of Coimbatore as a part of the Vizha. The topics for the competition were Nature in & around Coimbatore, Heritage & Religious Places and People & Festivals. The winners under these categories are Mohamed Yassin, C R Jayaprakash and Dhandapani.

### Short Film Competition, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009

A short Film competition was conducted as part of the Coimbatore Vizha by the Konangal Film Society to encourage Coimbatoreans to make films in any format (Documentary/Fiction/Animation) with the a focus on Coimbatore like to derive inspiration from the dynamic history/legacy of the past, to identify our Culture which nurtures social amity and diversity and to trace the City's unique contributions towards modernization and the need for our commitment to protect the environment for posterity. Response to the competition was good. Out of the entries received three films were selected for the prize and one special jury award was given away.

### Talks & Lectures

#### Kovaiyin Varalaatru Sorpozhiyugal, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> January 2009

As the name suggests this event had a series of lectures held over a period of five days at the Sanmarga Sangam Hall. The event had two well-known speakers on each day speaking about the people who made tremendous contributions to the development of Coimbatore and made it in to a place that we are all proud today. Eminent speakers like **Dr Sirpi Balasubramaniam**, Former HOD of Tamil, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, **Pulavar S Rasu**, Former Head, Department of Epigraphy & Archaeology, Tamil University, Thanjavur, **Dr R Poongundran**, Former Assistant Director, State Archaeology, Chennai, **Puzhavar Rasiannan**, President, Kalai Ilakkiya Kazhgam, Coimbatore, **P Chidamaranathan**, Editor, Om Sakthi, Coimbatore, **Kavianban Kovai Babu**, Author, Therintha Kovai, Theriyatha Kathai, **Dr N Balasubramaniam**, HOD of History, CBM College, Coimbatore, **Mr K S Hegde**, Managing Director,



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Tea Stanes Company Ltd., Coimbatore, **Mr AV Varatharajan**, Managing Director, Sandfits Foundaries P Ltd, Coimbatore, **Dr Amuthan**, Professor of Emeritus, NGM College, Pollachi addressed the gathering during the lecture series.

### **Textile History of Coimbatore, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

Popularly known as the textile capital of South India or the Manchester of the South it would be highly inappropriate to celebrate Coimbatore without the mention of its Textile History. Keeping this in mind Southern India Mills' Association



arranged for a talk by **Mr Vijay Venkataswamy**, Past Chairman, SIMA on the Topic Textile History of Coimbatore at SIMA Hall. **Mr Rohit Rajendran**, Chair - Young Indians Coimbatore Chapter & Executive Director, Premier Spg & Wvg Mills (P) Ltd gave the welcome address. Mr. Vijay Venkataswamy started his talk by mentioning the Textile Pioneers of India and about the venture of Textile Industry in India. He then mentioned about the initial textile companies in South India particularly Coimbatore. He then in brief spoke about the different pioneers who were born out of Coimbatore in Textile Industry. The talk continued with him referring to the Great Economic Depression of 1930's and what effect this had on the textile Industry.

He then spoke about the development of these industries and the associations and unions that supported this development. He concluded speaking about the prospective future of the Textile Industry.

### **Kongu Cuisine, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

The name Kongunadu originated from the term "Kongu", meaning nectar or honey. The erstwhile kingdom of the Chera, Chola, Pandya, Hoysala, invading Muslim rulers and finally the British gave to South Indian cuisine, a line up of hallmark delicacies like Pongal, VenPongal & Kalkandu Pongal; Ravadosa, Kootu, Ellu Urundai, Ezhanir Payasam, Pathanir Halwa, Karur Mutton Kuzhambu, Parrupu, Urundai Kuzhambu, Pallipalayam Chicken, Keeranoor Kuzhambu and Kari Meen Kuzhambu. In view of Coimbatore Vizha, Shivanjali organized a talk by Chef Jacob Sahaya Kumar Aruni at Vadavalli, to establish Kongunad Cuisine as one of the best cuisines of India. Chef Jacob is a Gold Medalist in Catering Technology & Hotel Management and is presently producing and presenting a travel and cookery show in sun TV by the name "Aaha Enna Rusi".



Mr Dipendar Singh, Member – Young Indians & Partner, Popular Automobile Accessories delivered the Welcome Address. During the talk he took two famous ancient kongu recipes – "Vethilai Thulasi Rice" & "Thenkinnam" and prepared for the audience. The ingredients for Vethilai Thulasi Rice were beetel, holy basil, kongu masala, basmathi rice and for Thenkinnam it was honey, dates, jaggary and sweet potato.

During his preparation he said," As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, Chettinad is the only cuisine that has achieved popularity amongst the masses. Keeping this in mind, and wanting to popularize the Kongu food he made 8 months research on kongunad cuisine with his team including 12 libertarians and collected various recipes. He said after

achieving the objective of inventing something different for food lovers, the next step was to take it across the world by way of holding food festivals in various hotel and restaurant chains around the world. He said Kongunad cuisine is basically a collection of exotic recipes being created by the people residing in the Kongu region and the recipes he prepared for the occasion of the vizha were almost 3 centuries old.

### **Roman Connection to Coimbatore, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

History, no doubt, is a fascinating subject. And when an aspect of history is revealed through the eyes of an archaeologist, the experience is not only that much richer, but equally rare. **Dr Sethuraman Suresh**, a renowned archaeologist, brought home the fact that Coimbatore is considered a heritage site among leading archaeologists from across the globe. He did so in the form of a most engrossing presentation delivered to a captivated audience at the Oxford book store recently. A PhD scholar in Roman archaeology from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Dr Suresh has devoted his research towards studying the presence of Roman influences in India. He has conceptualised archaeological tours, for various groups of people. He has also grown famous for his tours among scholars and students traveling from universities in the U K and the U S. One such is known as the Roman trail tour. It focuses on those locations in South India that house Roman artefacts. It also seeks to take the exact route that the Roman traders traveled centuries ago. Dr Suresh has also authored books on Roman archaeology in India along with textbooks that are used by over 10,000 schools. And, he is also a consultant at the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), in Chennai.



Through his research, Dr Suresh has unearthed a million little facts in history. And a large portion of these point towards a time, thousands of years ago, when Coimbatore played an integral role in the lives of the Roman people. He said that evidence of trade, diplomatic and cultural relations between India and Rome were found especially in southern India. And within South India, a large percentage of this evidence was unearthed in the Kongu region, which today forms a large portion of the district known as Coimbatore". Vast amounts of Roman coins and other artefacts have been discovered around Coimbatore. Example being the coin with an image of Julius Caesar, found near the city. An overwhelming majority of such artefacts have been discovered in places that include Pollachi and Vellalore. Pollachi is in fact the place where the first recorded find of a Roman coin anywhere in Asia was discovered.

### **Talk on Urban Planning in Coimbatore, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009**



Urban planning is the integration of the disciplines of land use planning and transport planning, to explore a very wide range of aspects of the built and social environments of urbanized municipalities and communities. As part of the Coimbatore Vizha, A lecture on Urban Planning in Coimbatore was organised by Kural Society at the SIEMA Hall. **Mr Soundararajan**, Vice President, Resident Awareness Association of Coimbatore (RAAC) gave the keynote address. He made a detailed presentation on history of urban planning and the modern day urban planning and how important it was for the overall development of India, specifically Coimbatore. He explained about how urban planning was done in the ancient times in

the cities of Hampi and Mysore. He made a special mention of the civic plan of Kanchipuram and how it can be a model for the Indian cities.

Mr Soundararajan also spoke about the contribution of Rathina Sabapathy Mudhaliyar in the making of the satellite township of R S Puram. He chalked out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the Coimbatore city and emphasised the relevance of linking small roads and streets, in the progress of Coimbatore as an investment destination. The talk ended on a positive note that each citizen and stakeholder in Coimbatore should join hands together and think on a common agenda on city planning. Over 60 delegates participated in the Session.

### **Coimbatore During Great Economic Depression, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

A great economic depression engulfed the World in first half of 1930's. That depression also started in USA and had an impact on India during its colonial rule. Coimbatore in early 1930's was getting industrialized. The agrarian economy was also not developed. The foreign rulers had little sympathy for the trouble India was facing. The same level of depression is being faced by the world and our city today. Everywhere we hear about companies going bankrupt, or speaking about job cutting or temporary closure of sectors of business or the entire business. In view of the current economic crisis in our Country, the experience and lessons of 1930's depression would be a great learning for us. Keeping this in mind a talk on the topic Coimbatore During Great Economic Depression was given by **Prof K A Manikumar**, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University at the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Coimbatore.



### **Tales Under the Wisdom Tree, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

Coimbatore Vizha marked the launch of a book named Tales Under the Wisdom Tree, A compilation of the articles that appeared in the Wisdom Tree magazine of Coimbatore Cosmopolitan Club. **Mr Rajesh Govindarajalu**, INTACH did the compilation of the book. The small book launch was held at Cosmopolitan Club attended by club members and others.

### **Book Review India's New Capitalists, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009**



The Coimbatore Book and Theatre Club together hosted a book review in view of the Coimbatore Vizha at Mani Higher Secondary School. **Mr Rajeev Kamineni**, Member - Young Indians & Director, Oxford Book Store reviewed the book India's New Capitalists by Harish Damodaran. **Air Vice Marshal (retd) Victor Srihari**, President, Coimbatore Book and Theater Club gave the introduction. The review was done on Background of the book, its origins and reason for publishing. Individual chapters in the book were discussed in detail. The other topics with relation to the book that was discussed were History of Capitalism in India, Is the word "New Capitalists" accurate?, Quality of writing and research etc. In the book

special emphasis was given to Kongunadu Naidus and Gounders in Chapter V and about the link of Reddys,

Rajus and Kammas. The reviewer had analysed the book from the angle of the socialisation process and the four traditional varnas. The book review ended with a discussion on the merits and demerits of the argument presented in the Book. Summing up and Conclusion was done by **Mr Rohit Rajendran**, Chair - Young Indians Coimbatore Chapter & Executive Director, Premier Spg & Wvg Mills (P) Ltd., **Dr Lalitha Ramasamy**, Secretary, Coimbatore Book and Theater Club gave the vote of thanks.

### **Kovaiku Vandha Imayangal, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

The association Sigaram Ungal Uyaram as a part of Coimbatore Vizha organised a talk under the name Kovaiku Vandha Imayangal at Gujarathi Samaj. The visit of three eminent people to Coimbatore was discussed. **Thiru Marabin Maindhan Muthaiya Avl** spoke about Gandhi's visit; **Mr T Stalin Gunasekaran** spoke on the Visit of V O Chidambaranathan and **Poet Mr C Rasiannan** spoke on Jeeva's visit to Coimbatore. The level of importance that Coimbatore had in the minds of these great people who visited Coimbatore was understood in the talks that were given.



### **Eco & Environment**

### **Tree plantation Drive, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

Since they evolved trees have had a great influence on the shaping of the ecology of our planet and in determining the present arrangements of life on earth. Of particular importance for us has been the role of trees in the evolution of mankind and the development of human cultures and communities. The development of civilization has been dependent on wood based technologies. Where would we be without such aspects of our culture as fire, agriculture, the wheel, the use of metals, spinning, weaving, water and land based transport, building, and printing? Our technological culture could not have developed without wood. The importance of trees in purifying the air, as natural resources, maintaining the ecological balance, preventing soil erosion, as medicines, habitats for faunal species, providing nutrients to the soil etc. is also well known. To many of us a tree is a thing of spiritual sustenance and renewal.

Keeping in mind the grave danger these ever giving trees are facing today a tree plantation drive was initiated. As a part of the "Coimbatore Vizha", Siruthuli proposed to plant 10,620 saplings in lieu with the 1062 trees chopped off from Avinashi Road. The planting activities commenced on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at 08:00 AM. Tree saplings of more than 10 varieties such as



Poovarasu, Neermathi, Sorgam, Pungan, Vaagai, Thoongu Vaagai, Yanai Kundrimani, Iyal Vaagai, Mahagony and Neem will be planted. With this step, Siruthuli moves further forward to the aim of creating more lung spaces within the city of Coimbatore. Students of Elgi Matriculation School, **Mr Mohinder Kumar**, Commandant, and **Mr E G Jose**, Deputy Commandant of Rapid Action Force (RAF) along with their team, **Mr Shankar Vanavarayar**, Chair, Coimbatore Vizha and Chief Executive, Sakthi Textiles and **Mr Rajeev Kamineni**, Member - Young Indians & Director, Oxford Book

Store, **Mrs Vanitha Mohan**, Managing Trustee, Siruthuli and Apex members of Siruthuli took part in the tree plantation drive.

### **Nature Trek, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

In old days we lived very closely with nature in one form or another. Today it's not the same, Time and sophisticated life style has taken us far away from so many pleasures that nature has to offer. Every individual has to take time off the noise and busy life to get at least a whiff of what the nature has. To bury our toes into the grass to closely feel our connection with our Mother Earth, to stand on the shore and become one with the sea and the land and bridge the two, simply to stand with your hands on the back of a very old large tree to feel the incredible rush of energy deep down in to the planet which bursts up again high in to the heavens and connects both or to realise a sense of connection with the wild life sharing the earth with us.

To give this experience to the people of Coimbatore, which is blessed by nature, a Nature Trek was organized to Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) an autonomous organization. It is a national centre for studies in Ornithology and Natural History. SACON is located at Anaikatty 24 kms northwest of Coimbatore on the way to Silent Valley one of the 'hot spots' of biodiversity in the world, offering endless opportunities to undertake long term studies on various aspects of its varied avifauna and on the biological principles and phenomena involved in the maintenance of the fragile systems. In its 55 acres of land with rolling hills, narrow streams and degraded and scrub forests, it has built up around 37,000 sq. ft of buildings for housing the office, laboratory, library etc



The trijunction of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka in the Western Ghats, considered to be one of the best wildlife areas in the country having a large extent of Protected Areas. Around 50 Coimbatorens took part in the Trek. The journey started from N Mahalingam & Co, Dr Nanjappa road, Coimbatore at 7.00am. The trek lasted for six hours at SACON. **Dr P Pramod**, Nature Education Officer, SACON engaged the participants during the trek. He briefed the participants about SACON and shared his research journey to the Coimbatorens. For most of them it was a first time adventure of being a part of Nature Trek and also proud about the fact that The SACON National Head quarters is in Coimbatore.

### **Coimbatore Vizha Quiz 7<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

A simple, fun and thought provoking quiz competition about Coimbatore was organised at PSG Medical College Auditorium by **Prof M Rangarajan**, Coimbatore Quiz Circle. Around hundred teams comprising of three members per team participated in the quiz competition. The quiz was meant for all ages. It was about Coimbatore, its nooks and corners, tradition, history etc. The questions were in Tamil and English. The competition had lots of audio, video and innovative rounds. The quiz covered Coimbatore's History, Monuments / Temples, Nature / Wildlife, Art / Literature, Personalities of Business, Politics, Sports and other fields. The main motto of conducting the quiz was to share the individual's knowledge about Coimbatore to the rest or learn facts about Coimbatore that one did not know.



## Cinema & Coimbatore

### Film Fest, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Many are not aware of the fact that not long ago Coimbatore was also a cinema hub with a number of studios being present and many films being shot here. To just remember the relation and importance that Coimbatore city shared with movie industry a film festival was organised by **Mr Pon Chandran**, Konangal Film Society. The agenda for the film festival was as follows. Pesaa Mozhi a documentary directed by M Senthamizhan was screened. While reviewing the film The Hindu wrote as under: The invite had a long list of questions. 'Did you know that a man from your city traveled throughout the country 100 years ago to screen films? Do you know the interesting trivia surrounding Variety Hall Road? How did films initially pull in the crowds?'

The film Pesaa Mozhi (Silent Language) was to provide answers to all those questions. The documentary traces the journey of Tamil silent movies, the masters behind them and seeks to crack riddles hitherto unexplained. It is sprinkled with interesting nuggets, interspersed with observations and opinions of experts. In 1905, Swamikannu Vincent, a

draughtsman in the Railways from Coimbatore, bought a projector from a Frenchman in Tiruchi, to become South India's first exhibitor. And, this was to cause a dramatic change in the entertainment arena of the nation. He set up a touring cinema that went around small towns and villages in the country. In fact, he went as far as Rangoon, Peshawar, Lahore and Mumbai with his touring cinema.



**Mr Theodore Baskaran**, a reputed Film historian and Scholar from Tamilnadu, introduced the Film. Some books authored by him are The Message Bearers, a standard reference on early South Indian cinema and theatre, The Eye of the Serpent - An Introduction to Tamil Cinema won the Golden Lotus award from the President of India. He has written on cinema in journals such as Seagull Theatre and Deep Focus. After the screening of the movie there was a screening of Award Winning Short Films produced by the Students of Coimbatore. There was another screening of a good Tamil Film, Malaikallan that was shot and produced entirely in Coimbatore Studio. The movie had Dr M G R starring in it. The Film Fest ended with the winners of the Short Film Competition being honored.

## Heritage Trail

### Trail to 10 Significant Places, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009

First of its kind in the history of Coimbatore a Heritage Trail was organised as part of Coimbatore Vizha. The trail was to let the people know about the hidden culture & heritage of Coimbatore. **Mr Rajesh Govindarajulu**, from INTACH organized the Heritage trail and also assisted by explained the history of the places that we visited. The Trail started off with the visit to Singanallur Ullagalanda Perumal temple. This temple is a home for the oldest bronze statue in our country.

Further to this, we moved to Ukkadam Lakshmi Narasimha temple where thousands of believers visit this temple on a regular basis, for the next stop we moved to Athar Jama Masjid. The façade was covered by number of arches from the floors surrounding an open court. The two minars on the northern and southern walls have domed roofs, which are about 85 feet high. On our way we visited Victoria Town Hall, which was saved from demolition by INTACH, with the public support.

We moved on to the Government Training School, which was built a century ago. A number of heritage structures dot this area. Then we moved to The Perur Temple, the sculptures found here are very rare and they belong to the top five percentile in our state. Perur is also the home to the eternal palm tree and the non-germinating tamarind tree.

Further the journey continued to Gass Forest Museum. The building has a splendid clear storey hall inside, with the gallery supported by cast iron columns. One can see specimens of forest life in various stages in this museum. The forest college is located in the same campus and the college is the home to the second oldest tower clock in our city. Then we moved on to TNAU, which is the symbol of Coimbatore. It is a knowledge centre, which has contributed enormously to the growth of Agrarian as well as food security in our great country.



We dropped in to the St Marks Church, which was built in 1920, and it is a unique example of a British Church built with the local materials available in the region. The last stop of our trail was Coimbatore Club. It is an excellent example of a colonial club, which was built exclusively for British Officers and planters. Indians were admitted into the club only from the year 1959. The trail Proved as an eye opener to the people who participated about the cultural heritage and important places in Coimbatore.

## Donate Blood

### Blood Donation Camp, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009

Many people consider it a right to receive blood when needed, but don't often consider the responsibility of giving blood to maintain the community supply for others. Blood is needed for emergencies and for people who have cancer, blood disorders, sickle cell, anemia and other illnesses.



Some people need regular blood transfusions to live. Imagine if giving blood was part of everyone's life. Something you did on a regular basis, like eating at your favorite restaurant. What kind of difference would that make? For nearly 5 million people who receive blood transfusions every year, your donation can make the difference between life and death. Blood cannot be artificially produced in the labs so it is our responsibility to donate it when ever possible for the benefit of all. Keeping this simple but vital fact in mind a Blood donation Camp was arranged as a part of the Coimbatore Vizha by **Mr Venkatesan**, Chairman, Vidiyal Blood Donors and team with the support of Coimbatore

Government Hospital in Vasavi Kalai Arangam. Around 43 donors came forward to donate blood. **Mr S Chandrasekhar**, Member - Young Indians & Partner, N Mahalingam & Co felicitated this noble cause.

## Ovia Sandhai

### A Unique Street Art Market, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2009

The cultural ethos of a city is defined by the way in which it treats its artists and artisans. From the time of its origin, Coimbatore is renowned for encouraging art and artistic expression. Celebrating the spirit of a city involves recognising and showcasing different dimensions of its culture. Drawing, painting and sketching are artistic forms of expressions that from time immemorial have captured the history and evolution of mankind. To recognise this ancient form of artistic expression, during the Coimbatore Vizha an “**Ovia Sandhai**” or the art market was planned to bring art and artists closer to the people. Ovia Sandhai was an attempt for the first time in Coimbatore to bring art to the Public to make art a part of mundane life and also to introduce affordable Visual Art to all. The one-day event featured around 80 artists from all over the state exhibiting and selling their works in the west club road of Coimbatore. The profile of the event went up with the presence of **Dr N Mahalingam**, Chairman, Sakthi Group of Companies, **Dr B K Krishnaraj Vanavarayar**, Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Coimbatore Kendra and **Mr Maniam Selvan**, Eminent Artist.



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## Testimonials

**Dr Kezo Vinu Aram**, Director, Shanthi Ashram:

Coimbatore Vizha helped to create a sense of unity in Coimbatore between people from different walks of life. Helped each of us to nourish the great tradition, history and its leaders. It taught us that all of us not only have something to give to the society but all can receive from one another too in different fields like art music culture etc.

**Mr Prakash**, Secretary, Temple of Fine of Arts:

The Vizha made us enjoy the experience of living in Coimbatore and made the ones who participated to feel Proud to be a Coimbatorian. It was an occasion, which gave all of us the opportunity to be together.

## Supported by

