

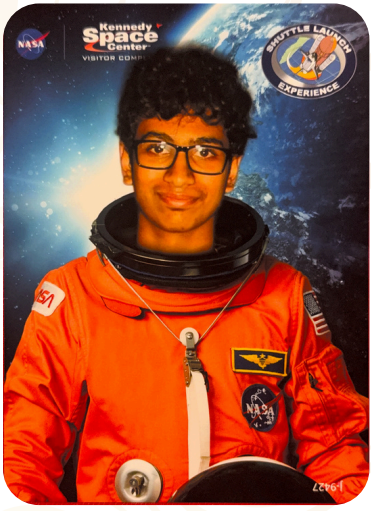
MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM

Mahima Newsletter

Issue# 3

Edited by Nehal Sabarinath





Author's Editorial

Dear MAHIMA Family,

I would like to thank everyone at MAHIMA especially the people who participated in the newsletter for their contribution and support. This is my first time editing for MAHIMA and I have to say it was a very fun and creative experience.

One of my hobbies and fascinations since childhood was to explore more about space and get to know more about the universe that we live in. I was able to reinforce this imagination by going to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida recently. Here I learned a lot more about space and specifically the missions and the dedication it takes to be an astronaut.

After going there, I realized that many things in life require dedication and focus just like going to space. I plan to use the lessons I learned at the space center in my own life!

I hope everyone enjoys our third issue of MAHIMA's newsletter! Thanks for reading!

**With gratitude,
Nehal Sabarinath
Youth Coordinator, MAHIMA**





A Message from the President...

Dear Mahima Family,

I would like to take a moment to sincerely thank Dear Nehal Sabarinath for coordinating this year's newsletter and bringing everything together so smoothly. Your effort and commitment in making this happen are truly appreciated. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Vinod Preet for his continued dedication in organizing and overseeing this project year after year.

I also encourage more of our kids and adults to take part in future newsletters. Whether it's a small write-up, a story, or sharing your thoughts — your participation will make our newsletter even more meaningful and vibrant.

Wishing you both all the very best, and thank you once again for your wonderful work.

**With gratitude,
Ranjith Nair
President, MAHIMA**



From the Secretary's Desk



Dear MAHIMA family members, Namaste and warm wishes to you all.

Passing on our culture and tradition to the next generation is one of our biggest responsibilities and requires intentional action, such as Satsang, spiritual classes, religious practice, and family rituals. Our children are our future, and we must keep them engaged in our rich traditions. Our goal is to foster a vibrant space dedicated to cultivating our Samskara and Dharma, with a special focus on empowering our youth. This thought drives our organization's efforts to conduct regular Saturday religious and Vedic classes, celebrate the main Hindu religious holidays, host family gatherings, and be involved in community services.

Over the past 25 years, MAHIMA has brought us together, grounding us in Kerala's rich traditions, vibrant festivities, and profound spiritual wisdom. MAHIMA also brought our youth closer to their roots and fostered a sense of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"- the world is one family.

We had a vibrant and active first quarter. Mandala pooja, Maha Shivaratri and Family night & graduation ceremony showcased a wonderful blend of spiritual, cultural, social and achievement focused unity. Please join us for the upcoming spring and summer events. We encourage you to invite fellow Malayali Hindu families to become a part of our extended family. Let us take pride in our roots and work together to nurture them in our children. Together, let us continue to preserve our traditions and build a future rooted in unity.

Dr. Ashamole Nair, General Secretary, 2026





From the BOT Chair's Desk

We all live in a world listening to many success stories as well as speeches of great people who give a lot of advice based on their experience or from hearsay experience.

As kids in this growing world, who are ready to face the world of real-life experience, understand that there are many factors that shape your experience and life in the world.

During this journey of growing up, you will come across multiple paths to delve into. How do you choose the correct path and after choosing, how do you make sure that you are going to succeed?

First, try to get to know yourself. Trying to know yourself through your own self-evaluation, not through others' words.

Knowing yourself is the key to the first step of success. In that way you will understand what it is that you want to do rather than that you would want to force yourself to climb into.

Make the choice by understanding what your passion is, and not by what gives you money or fame. Because going after money and fame will always end up stopping it midway.

Once you understand your passion, stick to it. If you have any doubts, try it for some time and see if you are happy in doing it. Only that thing which you are feeling happy about doing will succeed.

Now having chosen the path based on your passion. The most important factor in success is called determination. No matter what happens, you continue on the path.

A lot of factors shall come to you, or you may see a lot of people trying to pull you down saying that this is not the path for you. There may be a lot of people trying to laugh at you on your first failure and a lot of factors that try to pull you down. Many people may leave you.

But determination is what has brought great people to great heights. Once you stick to the goal you are determined to reach the goal. Once you have passion and determination, nobody can stop you. One day or other, you will definitely reach that goal. And you will go to great heights when you follow these two principles in life.

So instead of trying to learn from others, just try to get key points from others and use them in your life and create your own passion, develop that determination to success.

Dr. Unnikrishnan Thampy, BOT Chair



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MAHIMA Family Night

A Reflection from our President

Our Family Night was truly a beautiful and memorable evening. It was heartwarming to see such a wonderful turnout, with families coming together, reconnecting, and simply enjoying time with one another.

The venue and overall ambience felt warm and festive. A big thank you to our General Secretary, Dr. Ashamole Nair, for finding and securing such a wonderful place. And of course, our own “Alankara Acharyan,” Mr. Sudhakaran Pillai—what he did with the space was simply amazing.

There was also so much happening behind the scenes. Our cultural coordinator, committee members, and many of our past leaders gave their time, ideas, and support to make this event a success. This spirit of teamwork is what truly makes Mahima special.

But what really made the night shine was all of you. Seeing so many families walk in with smiling faces, kids running around and bringing such wonderful energy. We also owe a big thank you to the families who sponsored the event — your generosity helped make everything even better.

A sincere thank you as well to all the families and individuals who supported this event through sponsorship. Your generosity made a big difference and added so much value to the celebration.

A special congratulations to all our graduates. Your achievements make all of us proud. Wishing you the very best in everything ahead—we look forward to celebrating many more milestones with you.

One moment that really stayed with me was when a past President, Mr. Sreekumar, came forward and introduced himself. It was both a proud and humbling moment. It reminded me of all those who have led and supported Mahima over the past 25 years. Their vision and dedication are the reason we are where we are today—we are truly standing on the foundation they built.

That moment also made me reflect on my own journey in this role. When I first took over, I may not have fully expressed my gratitude to our immediate past President, Mr. Purushotaman Panicker, and General Secretary, Mr. Vinod Kearke. Now, experiencing the responsibilities firsthand, I have a much deeper appreciation for everything they have done and continue to do for Mahima.

As we celebrate this milestone year, Mahima is not just an organization—it is truly a family built on shared values, culture, and lasting connections.

**With sincere gratitude,
Ranjith Nair
President, MAHIMA**

Quinoa-Kale Salad With Dried Cranberries

BY PURUSHOTAMAN
PANICKER



INGREDIENTS (SERVES 6)

For Salad

- Multicolored or mixed Quinoa* 1 cup
- Organize Kale, fresh. 4 cups
- Dried Cranberries (Crasins)* 2 cups
- Candied or Roasted Pecans* 3/4 Cups
- Shredded carrots 1 cup
- Cherry Tomatoes 1 cup

For Dressing

- Extra Virgin Olive Oil 3/4 cup
- Balsamic Vinegar 1/4 Cup
- Scallion, thinly sliced (Green part only) 1 Tablespoon
- Salt 1/4 Teaspoon
- Freshly ground black pepper 1 Teaspoon
- Sugar 1/4 teaspoon
- Dried oregano 1/2 teaspoon.

INSTRUCTIONS

Preparation: Step 1: Rinse 1 cup of quinoa thoroughly, then cook with 2 cups of water, a pinch of turmeric, salt, and cumin over low heat until the water is absorbed. Allow it to cool. Meanwhile, clean Kale, remove the stems, cut into bite-sized pieces, let it dry, then massage with a little olive oil. Set aside.

Step 2: Combine 3/4 cups of Olive oil and 1/4 cup of Balsamic Vinegar. Whisk vigorously to make a thick dressing, then stir in all other salad ingredients and mix well. Add more salt and pepper if needed. Set aside.

Step 3: Combine the cooked and cooled quinoa, massaged Kale, and Shredded Carrot in a large mixing bowl and mix gently. Add Cranberries and Pecans, stir well, then add the prepared dressing, stirring to coat and blend until everything is well coated. Taste for seasoning and adjust salt and pepper as needed. Let it sit for 5 minutes before serving, topped with Cherry tomatoes. This step helps you personalize the flavor, making the dish truly your own!



MY VISHU MEMORIES

Neha Nair



Vishu has always been a really special day in my family. Even though we don't live in Kerala, my parents still make sure we celebrate it the traditional way. I love Vishu because it's one of those days where everyone wakes up early, spends time together, and focuses on starting the year in a positive way.

One of the biggest traditions in my house is seeing the Vishukkani in the morning. The Vishukkani is something my parents set up the night before. It usually has fruits, vegetables, coins, a mirror, and a velaku placed together in a metal bowl called a Vilakku Thattu. We also put these bright yellow flowers from our backyard as kani konna. I think it's interesting that the yellow flowers bloom just in time for Vishu every year. Every year on Vishu, my parents wake me up early, putting their hands around me and my brother's eyes and tell us to keep our eyes closed while they lead us to the Vishukkani. This is because the idea is that the Vishukkani should be the first thing you see that day. It is believed that the first sight on this day sets the tone for the entire year, so we should all be encouraged to set a positive start.

Another part of Vishu that I always looked forward to growing up is Vishu Kaineettam. This is when elders give money to kids as a blessing for the new year. As a little kid especially, this was probably the most exciting part of the day. I would go around to all my relatives and my parents to get even a dollar.

One of my favorite Vishu memories is celebrating it with my Mahima family. Some years, my cousin and I do a dance together or I do a dance with my friends. It's always a fun time to go enjoy and celebrate Vishu with my other family while seeing dances, songs, or acts which make the whole celebration feel lively and exciting. Being apart of these traditions makes Vishu feel special because I know that I will always have a great time and get to share moments with people I have fun with.

The food is also a huge part of Vishu. My family usually makes a big meal called a Vishu Sadya. It's served on a banana leaf and includes a lot of different dishes. There's rice with sambar, vegetable dishes like avial and thoran, and other sides. My favorite part is definitely the payasam.

For me, Vishu is really about this meaningful traditions and the time spent with family. Waking up early, seeing the Vishukkani, getting Vishu Kaineettam, and eating a big meal together are all simple things, but they create memories that stick with me every year.

MY WEEK IN DUBAI

ROHAN NAIR

During President's week, my family and I went on a trip to Dubai with my cousins and some family friends. I was super excited because I had never been there before, and I had heard that Dubai was an exciting and cultural place.

When I got there, I already felt like I was in Kerala. Lots of people spoke Malayalam and the food was super similar.

One of the first things we did was go camel riding in the desert. At first I was a little nervous because the camels were really tall and looked like they would throw me off their backs. But I tried it and it was such a fun experience . At first when the camel stood up, it felt kind of wobbly, but after a minute of getting used to it, it was actually really fun.



MY WEEK IN DUBAI

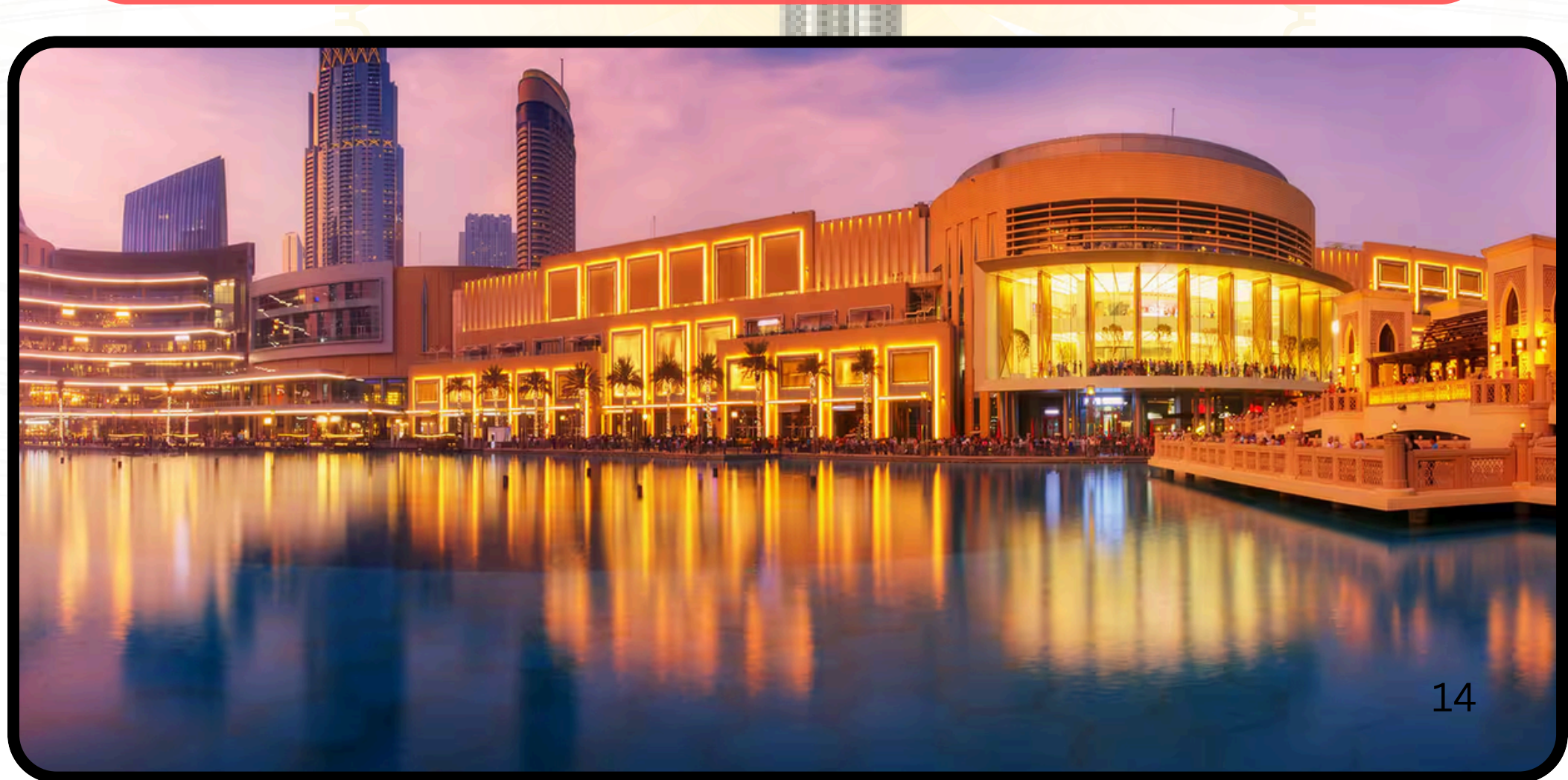
ROHAN NAIR

After that, we went driving through the desert in a really fast car. It felt like I was on a rollercoaster since the driver took us over the sand dunes, and the car went up and down the hills of sand super quickly. Everyone in the car was laughing and holding on because it was so bumpy and exciting. That was definitely one of the most fun parts of the trip.

We also visited a huge mall called the Dubai Mall that had a giant aquarium inside it. I thought that was really cool because you don't usually see an aquarium inside a mall. We saw a lot of different animals there, like penguins, jellyfish, sharks, and lots of colorful fish. One of the coolest things was that I actually got to pet a baby shark, which was something I never thought I would get to do.

While we were in Dubai, we passed by the Burj Khalifa many times. I was really surprised by how tall it was. It looked even bigger in real life than it does in pictures. Every time we drove by it, I kept looking up and having to strain my neck because it was so tall.

Overall, I had a really great time in Dubai. I got to try new things, see amazing places, and spend time with my family and friends. It was a trip I will always remember, and I hope I can go back there again someday.



BROWN BUTTER CHOCOLATE CHIP BANANA

BREAD RECIPE

By Meera Lal



Ingredients

- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3 mashed overripe bananas
 - 1 egg
- 2-4 tbsp milk (add if the batter is too thick)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips



Instructions

1. Preheat the Oven: Preheat your oven to 350°F
2. Next, make the browned butter. In a saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat. As the butter melts, it will begin to foam. Continue to stir the butter, and it will then start to turn a golden brown color and have a nutty aroma. This process usually takes about 5-8 minutes. Once it reaches a golden brown color remove it from the heat and transfer it to a bowl to cool.
3. Prepare the Pan: Use a rectangular baking pan and spread butter over it or cover it with parchment paper.
4. Next in a large bowl, mash the overripe bananas with a fork until they are smooth.
5. To the mashed bananas, add the cooled brown butter, brown sugar, egg, and vanilla extract. Whisk everything together until well combined.
6. In a separate bowl, whisk together the all-purpose flour, baking powder, and salt.
7. Next pour the dry ingredients into the bowl with the wet ingredients. Using a rubber/wooden spatula, gently fold the ingredients together until combined, and make sure not to overmix. (if your batter is too thick add in 2-4 tbsp of milk)
8. Next gently fold in the chocolate chips until they're distributed throughout the batter
9. Pour the batter into the baking pan. Spread it out evenly and top with more chocolate chips
10. Place the pan in the preheated oven and bake for 55-65 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
11. Finally, remove the brown butter chocolate chip banana bread from the oven and let it rest until it completely cools, usually for 40-50 mins

Reflection

A Short Story by Sabarinath Nair



The first time it happened, Aarav laughed it off.

“Multiple gods? That’s just... weird,” a classmate muttered during lunch, wrinkling his nose at Aarav’s food. A few others joined in, their chuckles light but sharp. Aarav forced a smile, pushing his lunchbox aside, pretending it didn’t matter.

But it kept happening.

In history class, someone whispered, “So which god do you pray to today?” In gym, they mimicked his folded hands in prayer. Each moment chipped away at him. At home, his mother lit a small lamp before their altar, the soft glow filling the room. Aarav watched from a distance, conflicted.

“Why so many gods?” he finally asked, frustration spilling out. “Why can’t we just be... normal?”

His mother didn’t react immediately. She handed him a glass of water and said quietly, “When you feel ready, sit with me tonight.”

That evening, she opened an old book of stories. Not lectures—stories. Of courage, of seekers, of people who saw truth in many forms but stood firm in who they were. “We don’t have many gods because we’re confused,” she said gently. “We have many forms because we understand truth is vast.”

Aarav didn’t respond—but something settled inside him.

The next day, it escalated.

In the hallway, a boy grabbed the small pendant from Aarav’s neck. “Let’s see which god saves you now,” he joked, holding it up as others laughed.

For a second, Aarav froze.

Then the stories came rushing back—not as words, but as a feeling.

Steady. Grounded.

Reflection



“Give it back,” he said.

The laughter faltered at his tone.

“You think this is about ‘many gods,’” Aarav continued, stepping forward, his voice calm but unshaken. “It’s not. It’s about seeing the same truth in different ways. Like how you can have many teachers, but still learn the same subject.”

“You think many gods means confusion,” he continued, eyes locked on theirs. “But it means something bigger. It means we see the same truth in many forms—like one light through many windows.”

Silence spread.

“We’re taught to respect every path,” he added. “Even when people don’t respect ours.”

The boy’s grip loosened. Slowly, almost awkwardly, he returned the pendant. “I didn’t know that,” he muttered.

That moment didn’t magically fix everything. Some still whispered.

Some still didn’t understand.

But something had changed.

A week later, during a class presentation on world cultures, Aarav stood at the front of the room. His hands didn’t shake this time. He spoke about festivals, philosophy, and the idea that truth can wear many faces without losing its essence. He wasn’t defending himself anymore—he was sharing.

When he finished, there was no laughter. Just quiet... and then questions.

That night, Aarav lit the lamp himself.

He realized Sanatana Dharma wasn’t just something he inherited—it was something that gave him the strength to face doubt, the clarity to respond without anger, and the courage to remain whole in a world that tried to make him feel otherwise.

And for the first time, he didn’t feel different.

He felt complete.

Tusks, Temples, and Painted Canvas: My Elephant Enchantment

By Aishwarya Nair

Have you ever looked into the wise, ancient eyes of an elephant and felt an immediate connection? For me, that connection deepened into a full-blown enchantment during my travels through Karnataka and Kerala, two Indian states where these magnificent creatures are not just animals, but revered cultural icons.

I still vividly recall, as a young girl, one of my first profound encounters with these gentle giants at the Kateel Durgaparameshwari Temple in Karnataka: the moment an elephant gently placed its trunk upon my head, a touch that felt like a direct blessing from Goddess Devi herself, instantly conveying its majestic power and godlike stature.

As a young adult, my spirit soared when I visited the Guruvayoor temple and witnessed the daily elephant procession, known as Seevali. It was a moment of profound spiritual awe to see these grand elephants, adorned in splendid ceremonial coverings, carrying the sacred idol of Lord Krishna around the temple. Following this deeply moving experience, we then visited the nearby Elephant Sanctuary in Guruvayoor. Imagine: over 30 majestic elephants, each with its own unique personality, enjoying their days in this dedicated haven. Seeing them up close, calm and so well cared for, was an unforgettable experience. It further solidified for me why the elephant is Kerala's official state animal – they are truly ingrained in the soul of 'God's Own Country.'



Beyond the peaceful sanctuaries, it's in Kerala's vibrant temple festivals that the elephant's grandeur truly takes center stage! Take, for instance, the Thrissur Pooram, a dazzling spectacle of sound and color where these magnificent creatures are the undeniable stars. Adorned with glittering golden caparisons (nettippattams) and vibrant, tiered umbrellas, they parade with a majesty that literally takes your breath away. These aren't just animals in a parade; they're treated with immense reverence, often seen as living forms of the deities themselves. On one memorable visit, we were fortunate enough to witness the Kollam Pooram as well, adding another incredible layer to my understanding of Kerala's rich elephant traditions.



Karnataka also brings its own brand of elephant magic with the world-famous Mysore Dasara. Here, the Jumbo Savari, a grand procession, is led by impeccably decorated elephants, with the lead tusker carrying the sacred golden howdah (ambari). These elephants undergo special training and care year-round for this prestigious role – talk about VIP treatment!



My own personal elephant encounter cemented this adoration. It was in Kollam, where I had the incredible opportunity to ride an elephant. Perched high above the ground, feeling the gentle, rhythmic sway of its powerful body, I was overcome with a sense of awe and profound peace.

It was a moment of pure magic, a connection to an ancient spirit.

Every profound encounter, from the sacred blessing at Kateel to the peaceful sanctuary, the vibrant temple festivals, and my exhilarating ride in Kollam, had deepened my connection and transformed these gentle giants into an irresistible inspiration. So, when an assignment in my art class called for an acrylic painting subject, there was really only one choice: the elephant. As I worked, meticulously trying to capture those gentle, knowing eyes, the powerful, majestic sweep of their trunks, and the delicate patterns of their wrinkled skin, it wasn't just painting – it was a re-discovery, a deeper appreciation for the unique beauty held within every single detail of this incredible creature. My acrylic painting of an elephant, therefore, is more than just a picture; it's a heartfelt tribute to those incredible moments and the deep reverence I hold for these magnificent beings.

From the grand spectacles of Dasara to the peaceful sanctuary of Guruvayoor, and even to my own canvas, Asian elephants in Kerala and Karnataka have left an indelible mark on my heart. They're a testament to the beauty of nature, the richness of culture, and the enduring power of a truly magnificent animal.

Acrylic Painting by Aishwarya Nair



GARLIC PARMESAN CHICKEN PASTA RECIPE

By Reena Babu

Ingredients

For the chicken:

1 lb boneless chicken breast. (Pound the chicken slightly for even cooking)

Salt to taste

1 tsp smoked paprika powder

1 tbsp garlic powder

1 tsp black pepper

2 tbsp oil (for marinade)

2 tbsp clarified butter/ghee

1 tbsp butter

The sauce

1 small yellow onion, finely chopped

1 tbsp fresh garlic, minced

2 tbsp all purpose flour

1 1/2 cup chicken broth or 1 cube chicken

bouillon + 1 1/2 cup water

1 1/2 cup unsweetened heavy whipping cream

Salt to taste

1 tbsp smoked paprika powder

1 tsp red chili flakes

1/2 tsp black pepper

1 tsp garlic powder

1 tbsp dried parsley

1 tbsp Italian seasoning

1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated

Instructions

Season the chicken with salt, pepper, garlic powder, smoked paprika powder. Drizzle oil and mix to coat evenly. Let it marinate for at least one hour.

Heat a pan on medium heat add clarified butter, once the butter is hot. Add the chicken and cook for 8 to 10 minutes flipping sides in between or until the chicken is cooked through and the internal temperature reaches 165°F. Remove the chicken from the pan, slice and set aside.

In the same pan add butter once the butter is melted. Add onions sauté for one minute until translucent. Add the garlic and sauté until fragrant for about 30 seconds. Then add the seasoning, salt, pepper, garlic powder, smoked pepper powder, red chili flakes and Italian seasoning. Mix everything together and add the flour.

Stir in the flour and cook for one minute.

Gradually add the chicken broth and mix until the sauce thickens. Cook on medium heat for 2-4 minutes. Stir in the heavy whipping cream and whisk until the sauce thickens further. Add the freshly grated Parmesan cheese and parsley, mixing well.

Add in pasta and top it with sliced chicken. Mix everything together and top it off with more Parmesan cheese if desired.



Drawing by Shwetha Nair



Shiva: The Balance of Light and Shadow!

Shwetha Nair



MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
**A TINY BEAUTIFUL FRAGILE PLANET
CALLED HOME**

**BY SAJI
HAREESH**

As I sit in my parents' drawing room in a beautiful village in Kerala, I watch a squirrel savoring a ripe jackfruit a few yards away. He came, started munching the fruit that was slightly cracked open and called out to his buddies. Within moments, a group of squirrels joined in sharing the large jackfruit.

Soon a grey hornbill flew in and started pecking on the other side. An array of ants and bees are feasting on the fallen bits of fruits on the ground. Within minutes there is a group of diverse 'individuals' savoring a single fruit, each from their own corner.

This little gathering reminded me of a mindset that perceives the Earth as our home and all beings that share space with us as co-habitants of this beautiful home.

It is telling me that we are all connected far more than we are aware of. If we just look around us, within us, we will find that we share far more in common than there are differences. Just like the squirrel, the grey hornbill, the ants, and the bees, I too enjoy a sweet juicy jackfruit.

This squirrel clearly practices the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, that 'the world is one family'. As Harry David Thoreau famously quoted in Walden, "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life..", this squirrel has a simple life focused on what truly matters. For him, that is simply his nature.

MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
**A TINY BEAUTIFUL FRAGILE PLANET
CALLED HOME**

**BY SAJI
HAREESH**

Perhaps he already understands what we humans are still learning – that this fragile planet is not owned by any of us but shared by all those who are here, and those who will be here.

Astronaut Sunitha Williams, after her extended stay for several months in the International Space Station, had shared in many interviews how she began to see the Earth not as a collection of countries with borders but simply as home. Perspective changes when we look at things, events, and the world around us, from where we look at it and how we choose to see.

When we look at the Earth from far above, I imagine, the borders would disappear, there will be no labels, no divisions, just one fragile beautiful planet that we call home. From closer above, I imagine, one would see the vast oceans, magnificent mountains, glaciers and endless landscapes. And then a little closer, looking down on earth, one would see the borders, the glittering cities, the countries and capitals.

From close home, one would see the vibrant colors of festivities, conclaves, institutions, war zones, peace keeping forces, and perhaps a little girl looking for safety and shelter. Or perhaps we might see a squirrel munching a fruit and calling others to join his party.

TO READ OR NOT TO READ - IT'S YOUR CHOICE.**AN ARTICLE BY
VINOD KEARKE**

Lately it is in the air about the concerns of the misuse of the internet and the growing addiction to digital devices among children. Parents are increasingly worried about excessive screen time, exposure to inappropriate content, and the psychological effects of constant online engagement. Studies suggest that heavy dependence on the internet may contribute to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and, in extreme cases, self-harm. As a result, some advocates have gone so far as to compare internet addiction to substance abuse, such as alcohol and tobacco. In response to these concerns, governments and educational institutions around the world are beginning to take action. For instance, the Australian government has proposed banning social media use for children under the age of sixteen, while several European countries and school districts in the United States are exploring similar restrictions.

In this context, it is important to examine whether banning social media entirely is the most effective way to address these issues. While such measures may reduce immediate exposure to harmful content, they may also overlook the broader role that the internet plays in modern life. The internet is not only a source of entertainment but also a powerful tool for learning, communication, and creativity. Completely restricting access could hinder children's ability to develop essential digital skills that are increasingly necessary in today's world.

A more balanced approach would involve guiding children toward responsible and healthy internet use rather than enforcing strict bans. Parents play a crucial role in monitoring screen time, setting boundaries, and engaging in open conversations about online experiences. By fostering trust and awareness, children are more likely to make informed decisions about their digital behavior. Additionally, schools can incorporate digital literacy programs that teach students how to identify harmful content, avoid online risks, and maintain a healthy balance between online and offline activities. Furthermore, technology companies and policymakers share responsibility in creating safer online environments. Implementing stricter content moderation, designing age-appropriate platforms, and ensuring transparency in algorithms can significantly reduce the risks associated with internet use. An outright ban on social media may not be the most practical or sustainable solution, instead a comprehensive strategy that combines education, parental involvement, and responsible regulation is more likely to produce positive long-term outcomes.

In this context let us examine the advantages of reading. It is universally accepted that reading is one of the most valuable habits a person can develop, offering a wide range of intellectual and emotional benefits. First and foremost, it exposes individuals to new ideas, perspectives, and knowledge, allowing them to understand subjects in greater depth. Whether it is academic material or general reading, it helps build a strong foundation of understanding.

Another important advantage of reading is vocabulary development. As readers encounter new words and expressions, they naturally improve their language skills, which enhances both written and verbal communication. This not only helps in academic and professional settings but also boosts confidence in everyday interactions.

Reading also plays a significant role in stimulating creativity and imagination. When we read, especially stories or descriptive texts, our minds visualize scenes and concepts, encouraging innovative thinking. This creative stimulation can lead to new ideas, problem-solving skills, and even personal inspiration.

In addition, reading has proven mental health benefits. It strengthens brain function by improving concentration, memory, and analytical thinking. At the same time, it serves as an effective way to reduce stress, offering an escape from the pressures and complexities of daily life. Reading is not just a source of information but a powerful tool for personal growth. It enriches the mind, enhances communication, fosters creativity, and promotes overall well-being, making it an essential practice for a balanced and successful life.

The truth is, there is no single "best" approach-what works brilliantly for one person may not suit another at all. Life is not meant to be confined to a single path, and limiting yourself to just one option is neither practical nor truly rewarding. Instead, it is your unique journey, shaped by your choices and experiences. The power lies in your hands, and whatever path you choose, you will ultimately be the one to reap its rewards and shape your own success. You decide, It's your choice.

Drawing by Aektha Nair



Krishna Under the Moonlight

- Aektha Nair



From One Grain to a Mountain

A FABLE BY DEEPAK KANA

Can something as small as a single grain turn into a mountain? A wise man once showed a king that it could.

Long ago there lived a king who loved puzzles and games. One day a wise man came to his palace with a new game called chess, played on a board with 64 squares.

The king loved the game and decided to reward the inventor.

“Ask for anything,” the king said proudly. “Gold, jewels, land—whatever you want!”

The wise man bowed politely.

“Your Majesty, I ask for only a small reward.”

The king smiled. “What is it?”

The wise man pointed to the chessboard.

“Place one grain of wheat on the first square, two grains on the second, four grains on the third, eight grains on the fourth.

On each new square, simply double the grains from the square before it.”

The king laughed.

“You could have asked for treasure! Instead you want a few grains of wheat?”

“Yes, Your Majesty,” said the wise man.

From One Grain to a Mountain

A FABLE BY DEEPAK KANA

The Counting Begins

The servants began placing grains on the board.

Square 1 – 1

Square 2 – 2

Square 3 – 4

Square 4 – 8

Square 5 – 16

Square 6 – 32

Square 7 – 64

Square 8 – 128

Square 9 – 256

Square 10 – 512

In only 10 squares, one grain became 512 grains!

But the chessboard had 64 squares. When the royal mathematicians finished their calculations, the answer shocked everyone!

The total would be more than 18 quintillion grains of wheat (18,446,744,073,709,551,615 grains !).

That was more wheat than the entire kingdom could grow for many years.

The king had learned an important lesson: small numbers that keep doubling can become enormous.

Secrets Hidden in the Story:

Apart from understanding the folly of arrogance, there are two secrets hidden in the story.

1. Compounding

Compounding means something grows, and then the growth itself begins to grow.

The grains doubled again and again, becoming larger each step.

2. Time

Compounding becomes powerful only when it continues for a long time.

Imagine each square on the chessboard is one year of your life. If you start saving early, your money has many “squares” to grow. If you start late, there are fewer squares left.

Time makes compounding powerful.

From One Grain to a Mountain

A FABLE BY DEEPAK KANA

A small kind of freedom

I must admit something. I understood this idea only later in life, and I wish someone had explained it to me when I was young.

That is one reason I wanted to share this story with you. Saving and investing early cannot solve all problems in life but it can give us a small yet important kind of freedom-- a freedom to make choices without compromising ourselves!

There is a beautiful Malayalam proverb:

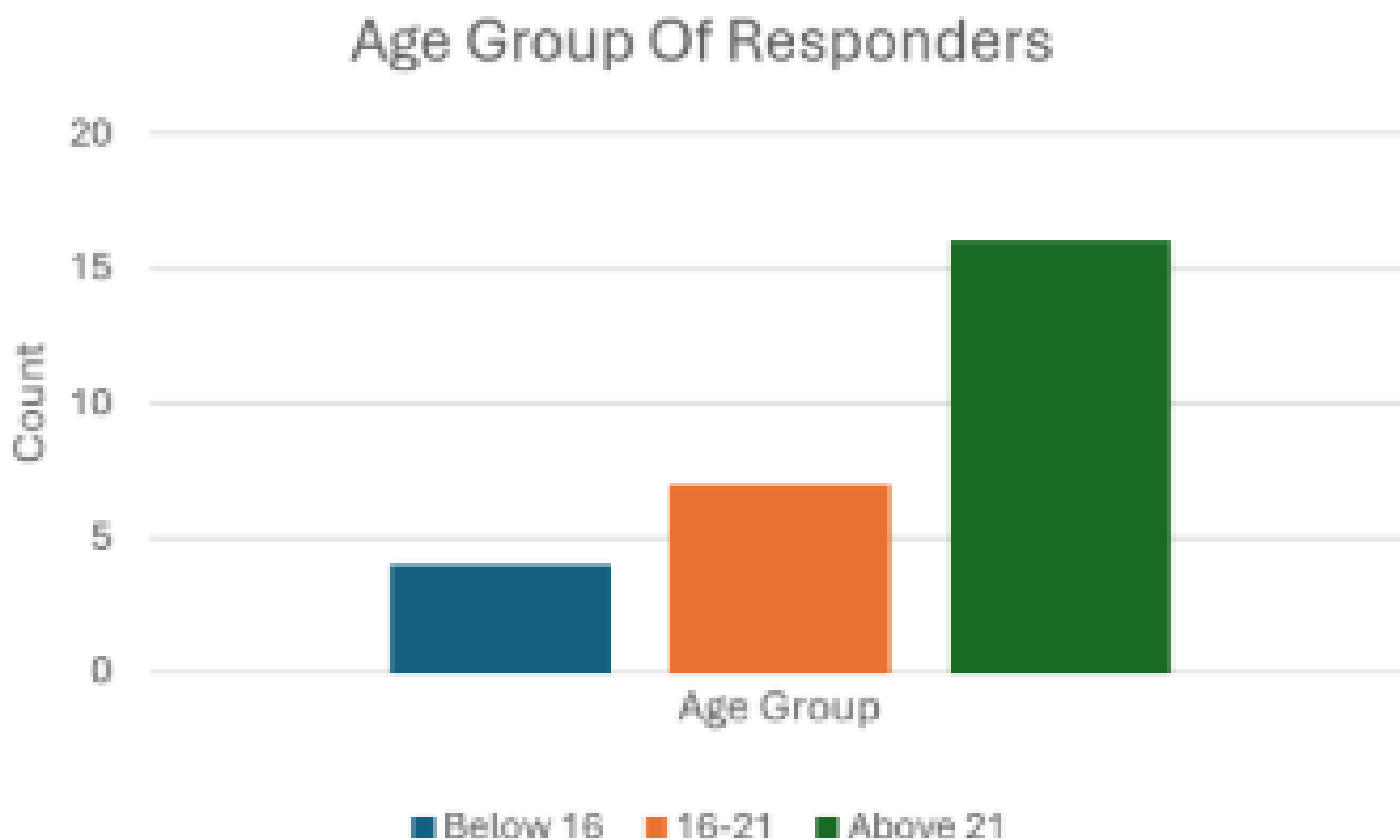
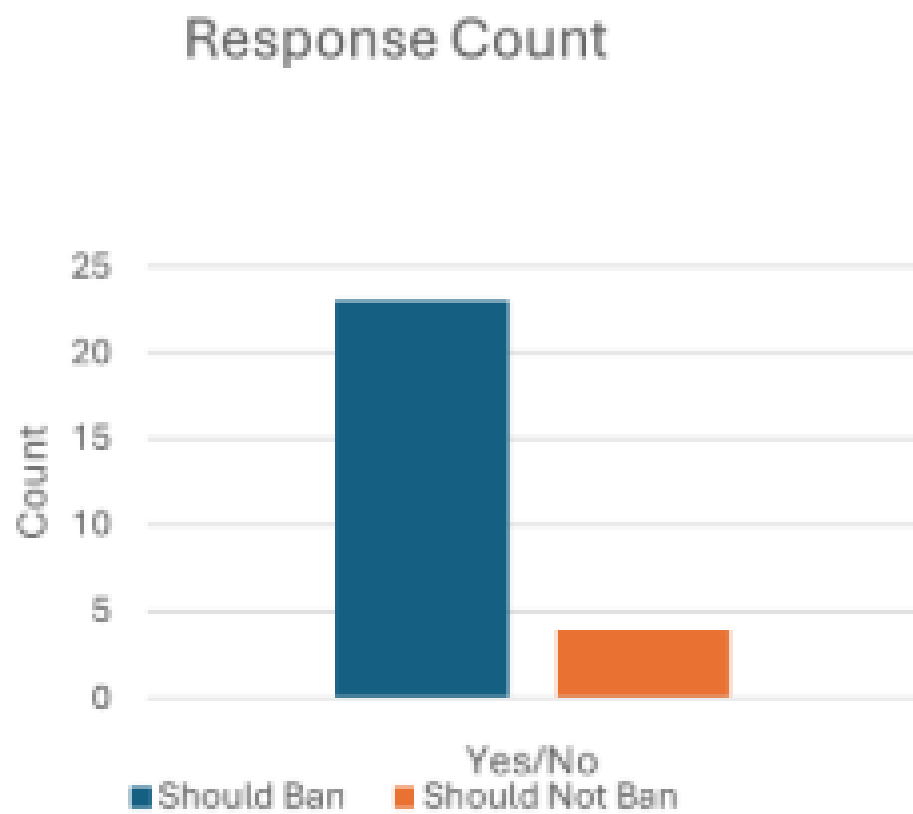
“പലതുള്ളി പെരുവെള്ളം”

It means “many small drops make a great river.”

Saving a little, starting early, and giving it time to grow can turn one grain into a mountain.

SHOULD GOVERNMENT BAN SOCIAL MEDIA SITES/APPS FOR KIDS?

A STUDY BY VINOD PREETH



Nine responders from MAHIMA family out of 27 who took the survey, clearly articulated their opinion.

| Do you support ban? | If yes, why? If not, why? | Age Group |
|---------------------|--|-----------|
| No | Since we are going into an era of AI and away from books, it is important for kids to know what is happening. Parents must just educate kids on pros and cons of social media. Kids are smarter than what old generations think about their ability to know what is right and wrong. Let them explore this world and opportunities safely with guidance and don't restrict or impose our old traditions on them. | above 21 |
| Yes | Distraction and harmful to get exposed to many things before emotional maturity. | above 21 |
| Yes | Social media sets unattainable expectations on what reality is, and kids (sometimes adults) think that's how life is, and when things don't turn out that way, it's very confusing, frustrating and disappointing. And now with AI, it's added confusion on what's 'real' vs fake. | above 21 |
| Yes | I think minors under the age of 16 are too impressionable and don't understand what the media really is and will have a hard time being able to use social media in a way that is effective and healthy. | 16 to 21 |
| Yes | So they may not be influenced by extremists, businesses and predators. | below 16 |
| Yes | Social media apps lead to declining grades | above 21 |
| Yes | Distraction from their day-to-day activities, less social interactions, less physical activities | above 21 |
| No | Not all social media should be banned for kids 16 and older Advocate and enforce responsible usage. Have regulated content, make companies accountable for how the media works and distribute content. | 16 to 21 |
| No | Social media is a way for people to connect and keep up with what's going on in their friends and families lives. Yes, it is not the safest, but there are settings that can be changed that fixes this issue. Kids also need to know what to post and what not to post. But social media has allowed me to connect with friends I don't get to see often. It has also allowed me to connect with family, as I have some of my cousins and aunts in India added as friends. If used correctly, social media can be good. It can lead to new ideas, and it allows for a sense of community. Social media needs to change and become safer, but banning it altogether is not the solution. | 16 to 21 |

Survey conducted by Vinod Preet. Responders were allowed not to mention their names (anonymous).

MY DANCE JOURNEY**BY GOWRI NAIR****My Dance Journey**

Dance has always been an important part of my life. I started learning classical Indian dance when I was almost 5 years old. At first, It was just something fun to do as I was dancing with my cousin and friends and performing every year for their anniversary, but over time it became something really meaningful to me.

When I was a little older, I started learning Bharatanatyam. This dance style is strong and expressive. It includes sharp movements and facial expressions that help tell stories. Learning It took a lot of practice, but It also taught me patience and discipline.

Later, when I was eleven I began learning Mohiniyattam. This kind of dance came from Kerala and is softer and more graceful, with smooth and flowing movements. It felt very different from Bharatanatyam, but It helped me learn another beautiful style of dance.

One of my favorite parts of dancing was performing for Mahima. I especially enjoyed dancing during celebrations like Vishu and Onam.

Performing at these festivals made dancing feel even more special because I could show the culture of dance and share It with others.

Overall I hope I still continue doing dance even after high school and hope to perform during every opportunity I get.

SCRIPTURES

BY VIKRAM NAIR

Our scriptures states that every human child is born with four debts and he/she must pay back these debts:

The four debts are:

- **Debt to your ancestors**
- **Debt to the celestials**
- **Debt to the sages**
- **Debt to the community**

The first debt to your ancestors. This debt is repaid by getting married and having children, thereby continuing the family line.

Breaking the family line is considered a sin.

The second debt to the celestials: The celestials control the elements on Earth, such as rain, water, air, heat, sunlight, and vegetation. They make life possible on our planet. You can repay this debt by offering a small portion of the bounty they provide to humans through yajnas (ritual sacrifices) or by simply expressing gratitude for all that they have given you through prayers.

Debt to the sages: All our scriptures are written by sages for the welfare of mankind. It is the duty of humans to study these scriptures and pass them on to the next generation; otherwise, they risk becoming extinct.

Debt to society: Whether we acknowledge it or not, we owe a great deal to society. Without it, we could not live as we do today. It is our responsibility to repay our debt to society by volunteering, helping others in need, or simply giving to charity.

CYBER SECURITY, CLOUD AND STORAGE**BY RAVI NAIR****Cyber Security, Cloud and Storage****Ravi Nair**

As an Infrastructure Storage Solutions Architect, I often have to spend countless hours with multiple platform teams (Servers, Databases, Networks, Security, Applications) to research, plan and design effective data storage solutions, and address challenges that arise due to cyber security threats, also known as ransomware attacks. Organizations spend millions of dollars every year, to protect their valuable data against these attacks. Data storage grows in Peta-Bytes and Exa-Bytes every year, along with increasing demands of technology growth and AI, all of this poses more challenges with protecting even more data than before.

Very often, as individuals, we also become victims of cyber threats knowingly or unknowingly. What are some of the basic terminologies and concepts that we should all be aware of? How can we protect our own identity and personal data?

Please take a moment to go through this very basic information on some of these topics. It is arranged as a FAQ, so it's easily readable and makes most out of your reading.

So, the first question you all would ask is – so what? I can get all of this information from the internet. Yes, you are right. But no one has the time to go and read, and most of the time they don't know what to search for. It is not the knowledge itself but knowing where and what to look for and how to apply those principles when needed are more important.

What is cloud?

In the simplest terms, cloud means a collection of “servers, data storage, databases, and software applications” accessed over the internet instead of on a local hard drive.

What are the 3 major cloud vendors?

The "Big 3" cloud providers - Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud Platform (GCP) - dominate the global cloud infrastructure services market, capturing over 65-70%

CYBER SECURITY, CLOUD AND STORAGE**BY RAVI NAIR**

Why are organizations moving towards cloud?

To achieve significant cost savings, enhance operational scalability, and improve agility.

Why is there is there a huge data growth?

The huge data growth is driven by the rapid digitization of global activities. Key factors include the explosion of IoT devices, social media, streaming, AI, and enterprise data. The global datasphere is projected to grow to 175 zettabytes by 2025.

What is a zettabyte? 😊

Data storage is measured in bits and bytes.

| Abbreviation | Unit | Value | Size (in bytes) |
|--------------|-----------|--------------------------|---|
| b | bit | 0 or 1 | 1/8 of a byte |
| B | bytes | 8 bits | 1 byte |
| KB | kilobytes | 1,000 bytes | 1,000 bytes |
| MB | megabyte | 1,000 ² bytes | 1,000,000 bytes |
| GB | gigabyte | 1,000 ³ bytes | 1,000,000,000 bytes |
| TB | terabyte | 1,000 ⁴ bytes | 1,000,000,000,000 bytes |
| PB | petabyte | 1,000 ⁵ bytes | 1,000,000,000,000,000 bytes |
| EB | exabyte | 1,000 ⁶ bytes | 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 bytes |
| ZB | zettabyte | 1,000 ⁷ bytes | 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 bytes |
| YB | yottabyte | 1,000 ⁸ bytes | 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 bytes |

PS: I am currently managing ~150 PB of data for the company 😊

CYBER SECURITY, CLOUD AND STORAGE**BY RAVI NAIR**

So what are these storage numbers represent? Can you give examples?

Kilobyte (KB) (1,024 Bytes): Small files, like a short text document.

Megabyte (MB) (1,024 KB): A high-quality MP3 song (approx. 5MB).

Gigabyte (GB) (1,024 MB): A full HD movie (approx. 4GB) or a standard smartphone capacity (64 GB – 512 GB).

Terabyte (TB) (1,024 GB): Typical external hard drive (1 – 8 TB), or roughly 2000 hours of HD video.

Petabyte (PB) (1,024 TB): A large data center's storage (10 – 100 PB).

Exabyte (EB) (1,024 PB): Total internet traffic – 10 to 15 EB - or vast amounts of global data.

Zettabyte (ZB) (1,024 EB): 150 ZB - Represents the approximate amount of data generated by all people on Earth as of today.

How is an organization's data protected?

Core strategies include robust encryption, strict access controls (Multi-Factor Authentication, least-privilege access), regular data backups, employee training, and adhering to compliance and security standards.

- **Encryption and Masking:** Transforming data into unreadable code (encryption) or obscuring specific data points (masking) ensures that intercepted information cannot be used by unauthorized parties.
- **Access Control and Identity Management:** Implementing Role-Based Access Control (RBAC) and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) ensures only authorized personnel can access sensitive information, reducing the risk of internal leaks.
- **Data Loss Prevention (DLP) & Firewalls:** Using DLP tools to monitor data usage and firewalls to manage network traffic prevents unauthorized data exfiltration.

BY RAVI NAIR

Backup and Recovery Solutions: Maintaining regular, automated, and often off-site or cloud-based backups ensures data can be restored after a cyberattack, hardware failure, or natural disaster.

- **Physical Security:** Protecting physical hardware by locking offices, server rooms, data center and filing cabinets, as well as securing mobile devices.
- **Employee Training and Policies:** Educating staff to recognize phishing, secure their workstations, and follow data handling protocols reduces human error, which is a major source of breaches.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Adhering to standards like GDPR, HIPAA, or PCI DSS ensures that data is managed according to strict, legally mandated guidelines.

What is a firewall?

A firewall is a network security system that acts as a barrier between trusted internal networks and untrusted external networks (like the internet), monitoring and controlling incoming and outgoing traffic based on predetermined security rules

What are some of the things I can do to protect my personal data and prevent identify theft ?

1. **Use Unique Passwords & A Password Manager:** Create strong, unique passwords for every account to prevent a single breach from compromising your entire digital life. See the table on the next page to see how long it takes for a hacker to decrypt your password:

CYBER SECURITY, CLOUD AND STORAGE**BY RAVI NAIR**

| Number of Characters | Numbers Only | Lowercase Letters | Upper and Lowercase Letters | Numbers, Upper and Lowercase Letters | Numbers, Upper and Lowercase Letters, Symbols |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 4 | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly |
| 5 | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly |
| 6 | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly | Instantly |
| 7 | Instantly | Instantly | 1 sec | 2 secs | 4 secs |
| 8 | Instantly | Instantly | 28 secs | 2 mins | 5 mins |
| 9 | Instantly | 3 secs | 24 mins | 2 hours | 6 hours |
| 10 | Instantly | 1 min | 21 hours | 5 days | 2 weeks |
| 11 | Instantly | 32 mins | 1 month | 10 months | 3 years |
| 12 | 1 sec | 14 hours | 6 years | 53 years | 226 years |
| 13 | 5 secs | 2 weeks | 332 years | 3k years | 15k years |
| 14 | 52 secs | 1 year | 17k years | 202k years | 1m years |
| 15 | 9 mins | 27 years | 898k years | 12m years | 77m years |
| 16 | 1 hour | 713 years | 46m years | 779m years | 5bn years |
| 17 | 14 hours | 18k years | 2bn years | 48bn years | 380bn years |
| 18 | 6 days | 481k years | 126bn years | 2tn years | 26tn years |

Enable Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA): Add an extra layer of security to your email, banking, and social media accounts, ensuring that a stolen password alone is not enough to gain access.

3. Keep Software Updated: Regularly install updates for your operating system, browser, and apps to patch vulnerabilities.

4. Use a VPN on Public Wi-Fi: When connecting to public Wi-Fi, use a virtual private network (VPN) to encrypt your traffic and prevent snooping.

BY RAVI NAIR

- 5. Think Before You Click (Phishing Protection): Do not click links or download attachments in unexpected emails or texts, even if they appear to be from known sources.**
- 6. Secure Your Mobile Device: Use a strong passcode or biometric authentication (face/fingerprint) to protect your phone and never leave it unattended in public.**
- 7. Limit Social Media Sharing: Set profiles to private, avoid posting personal details like your address or pet names, and reconsider taking part in viral quizzes that ask for identifying information.**
- 8. Shred Sensitive Documents: Dispose of bank statements, credit card offers, and documents containing personal information by using a paper shredder.**
- 9. Monitor Financial Statements & Credit: Regularly review bank statements for unauthorized transactions and check your credit report annually for fraudulent activity.**

And finally, how can control the electronic data growth and make sure unwanted data is deleted and unused electronic equipment is destroyed appropriately ?

- Do not just move files to the trash. Use software to overwrite data, making it unrecoverable.**
- Use tools to manage and delete temporary files, cached data, and unnecessary downloads.**
- Periodically review cloud storage and external drives, deleting old, duplicate, or sensitive files you no longer need.**
- Use certified IT asset disposal services that provide a certificate of destruction.**
- Factory reset phones and tablets, and ensure encryption is enabled before disposal.**

A QUESTION FOR MAHIMA STUDENTS

WHY DO WE EXIST?



From the moment humans could think, we began asking big questions.

Why do stars shine?

Why is there a universe?

Why do we exist?

For thousands of years, philosophers, scientists, and thinkers across the world have tried to understand these questions. Ancient thinkers in India, Greece, and China all explored the same mystery: the meaning of existence.

Today, scientists study the universe through telescopes and space exploration. At the same time, researchers are studying human intelligence, consciousness, and even artificial intelligence. But all of these discoveries begin with something very simple.

Curiosity.



The willingness to ask questions.

Many of the greatest discoveries in history started when someone asked a question that others had ignored.

Why does an apple fall?

How do stars form?

What is inside an atom?

Every generation adds something new to human knowledge.

The next big questions may come from students like you.

So here is something to think about:

If you could ask the universe one question, what would it be?

Maybe the journey of discovering that answer could change the world.



EVENT RECAP

AT A GLANCE

Contributed by

Vinod Kearke &
Purushotaman Panicker

- ONAM AND JANMASHTAMI
- DANDIA EVENING
- FUND RAISING DRAMA
- DEEPAVALI
- FIELD TRIP
- CHILDREN'S DAY
- MANDALA POOJA
- ANNUAL GENERAL BODY

Many of the vibrant events took place in 2025, especially in the second half, and were not included in our last published Newsletter. Those events were possible only with the help of our families, friends, volunteers, and sponsors. Thank you all for your support and generosity.

The planned General Body meeting in December 2025 was postponed due to weather-related issues and was held in January 2026. Welcome to a group of vibrant and energetic men and women to the helm for 2026.



MEGATHIRUVATHIRA THE COOLEST EVENT EVER

□ ONAM AND JANMASHTAMI CELEBRATION

The Onam Celebrations were held on September 13, 2025, with a procession, Mega Thiruvathira, and Chenda Melam, accompanied by Onam Sadhya and a Cultural Event.

□ DANDIYA NIGHT-

The passionate and energetic Dandia night, organized by Vaishnavi Nambiar, was held on October 18, 2025.

□ FUND RAISING DRAMA

A spectacular fundraising event was held on October 25, 2025. The inspiring drama Chitraragam was a huge success, both financially and culturally.

□ DEEPAVALI CELEBRATIONS

Deepawali was pleasantly celebrated on November 1, 2025, with Great enthusiasm on November 1, 2025.

□ FALL FIELD TRIP

Our unforgettable Field trip was a refreshing and fun-filled. This was done on November 8, 2025, with some enthusiastic family members and friends.

□ CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

Children's Day was celebrated on November 15, 2025, with excitement, outings, and bowling. The FOOD DRIVE event was also organized by the kids later in the week.

□ MANDALA POOJA

A devotional mandala pooja was celebrated on December 22nd, featuring bhajans and Ayyappa pooja.

MAHIMA Family Night 2026 Memories



MAHIMA FAMILY NIGHT 2026

PHOTO: WWW.JOJOARTS.COM

MAHIMA Family Night 2026 Memories



MAHIMA Family Night 2026 Memories



MAHIMA FAMILY NIGHT 2026

PHOTO: WWW.JOJOARTS.COM



MAHIMA FAMILY NIGHT 2026

PHOTO: WWW.JOJOARTS.COM

MAHIMA Onam 2025 Memories



MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
MAHIMA Onam 2025 Memories



MAHIMA Onam 2025 Memories



MAHIMA Onam 2025 Memories



MAHIMA Onam 2025 Memories



MAHIMA Food Drive 2025



MAHIMA 2025 Children's day Bowling



MAHIMA One Day Picnic 2025



MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026



Deepa Das
D photography

MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026



MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026



MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026



MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026 - Fashion Show



MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026 - Fashion Show



MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026 - Fashion Show



MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026



MALAYALI HINDU MANDALAM
MAHIMA Vishu Celebration 2026

