

SCMS VIBES



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Happy Onam

Chairman, G.P.C. Nayar sends warm greetings to the SCMS family on the occasion of Onam and remembers the festival of his childhood in Thevannoor



“Those memories of Onam in Thevannoor, my village, are deeply cherished and continue to inspire me.”



File photos : Onam celebrations at SCMS campus, 2011

The first issue of SCMS Vibes is themed around Onam. Sir, what does Onam mean to you?

For me, the essence of Onam lies in its spirit of unity, joy, and cultural richness. Onam is a time when we come together, regardless of differences, to celebrate our heritage and the values of harmony and prosperity. It’s a reminder of our roots, the importance of community, and the joy of simple pleasures. Onam also symbolizes renewal and hope, encouraging us to look forward to the future with optimism and a sense of togetherness. It’s a festival that brings out the best in us, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in our cultural traditions.”

What are your memories of celebrating Onam during your childhood?

I hail from Thevannoor, a small village that holds many fond memories of my childhood, especially during Onam. In those days, Onam was a simple yet deeply joyous occasion. The

entire village would come alive with festivities. We would wake up early, pick fresh flowers from the fields for the pookkalam (floral carpet), and eagerly await the grand Onam sadya (feast) prepared with love by our elders. The sense of community was strong—neighbours would visit each other, exchange greetings, and share meals. There were traditional games, songs, and dances, and the excitement was palpable. What I remember most is the sense of togetherness and contentment that filled the air. Despite the simplicity of our lives, Onam was a time of abundance and happiness, bringing everyone together in a spirit of unity and celebration. Those memories of Onam in Thevannoor are deeply cherished and continue to inspire the way I view the festival today.

How have the traditions and celebrations of Onam changed since your younger days?

“Onam has certainly evolved over the years. In my younger days, the celebrations were more community-centred and simple. The focus was on traditional practices—gathering flowers for the pookkalam, preparing the Onam sadya with fresh, locally sourced ingredients, and participating in folk games and cultural performances. The entire village would come together, and the celebrations had a very personal, intimate feel.

Today, while the core traditions remain, Onam has become

more elaborate and commercialised. There’s a greater emphasis on grandeur, with larger pookkalams, more elaborate feasts, and cultural programmes on a grand scale. Technology and social media have also changed the way we celebrate, with people sharing their experiences online and even participating in virtual celebrations.

However, despite these changes, the essence of Onam—the spirit of unity, joy, and cultural pride—remains the same. It’s heartening to see that, even as times change,



From the EDITOR'S DESK

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our student-driven periodical, SCMS Vibes. As Chairman Sir aptly stated, this periodical serves as a platform for expressing ideas, fostering critical thinking, and taking ownership of one's academic journey. Our inaugural edition, inspired by the festive spirit of Onam, features engaging write-ups related to the celebration. We begin with insightful conversations with Chairman Sir, G.P.C Nayar, reminiscing about his childhood Onam experiences at Thevannoor, and our Group Director, Dr. Radha Thevannoor, sharing her perspectives on the evolution of the festival. Onam highlights like Onappattu and Pookkalam are explored in compelling pieces. Additionally, students delve into the significance of songs for Mahabali, the story of Thrikkakara temple, the modernization of Onam attire, film releases during the festival, and a captivating photo essay capturing the essence of Onam.

In light of the recent Wayanad tragedy, we have included a poignant article that draws parallels between the communal unity of Onam and the solidarity demonstrated by our community in aiding the disaster victims. SCMS Vibes builds upon the legacy of *Pratheek*, a student-contributed tabloid featuring articles, poems and artwork. Our annual journal, *Pratichhaya*, curated by SSTM MBA students, is unveiled at a memorable year-end event. Furthermore, the SCMS Group newsletter provides a comprehensive overview of the monthly activities across our five institutions. In addition to these publications, the Scopus Indexed Indian Journal of Management showcases scholarly research articles. SCMS Vibes aims to enhance the academic and editorial landscape with its vibrant and diverse content. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the contributors and the dedicated team behind this inaugural issue. We eagerly anticipate an enriching and creative journey ahead with our students.

people continue to honour the traditions and values that makes Onam special.

What is your favorite aspect of onam?

“My favorite aspect of Onam is the sense of togetherness it brings. Onam is a time when families and communities come together to celebrate, regardless of where they are or how busy their lives have become. The joy of sharing a meal, creating the pookalam, and participating in traditional games and festivities with loved ones is something truly special. It's this communal spirit, the warmth of being with family and friends, and the celebration of our cultural heritage that I cherish the most.

Do you have any special memories of Onam that you would like to share?

One of my fondest memories of Onam is the preparation and sharing of the Onasadya with my family. As a child, I remember the entire household getting involved in preparing the elaborate meal. The kitchen would be a bustling place, filled with the aroma of traditional dishes being cooked. Each family member had a role, whether it was cleaning the vegetables, preparing the pickles, or making the payasam. The joy and anticipation of sitting down together to enjoy the feast after all the hard work was something truly special. After moving to Cochin, the celebrations became more elaborate and modern, but I've always tried to maintain the traditional essence of Onam. So whenever possible, I make it a point to visit the village after the celebrations in Cochin. Going back to Thevannoor allows me to reconnect with my roots and relive those beautiful moments of my childhood, where Onam was



about simplicity, togetherness, and the warmth of family. It's a tradition I hold dear, and I try to pass it on to the younger generations in our family.”

Sir, What message would you like to convey to the students and staff of SCMS on this occasion?

As we revel in the spirit of Onam, let us remember that the festival symbolizes the return of the legendary King Mahabali, who represents prosperity, equality, and harmony. In the same vein, let us strive to foster an environment at SCMS that reflects these values—where every individual feels valued, where hard work is recognized, and where our collective efforts lead to shared success. I urge our students to embrace the spirit of continuous learning and growth, pushing the boundaries of knowledge and striving for excellence. To our staff, I extend my deepest gratitude for your unwavering commitment and hard work. Your dedication is the bedrock of our institution's success. This Onam, let us celebrate not just with the traditional festivities but also with a renewed commitment to our goals and values. Let us work together to make SCMS a beacon of educational excellence and a nurturing place for all. May this festive season bring joy, health, and prosperity to every member of our SCMS family.

Happy Onam to everyone!

(Courtesy: Anupama Menon, PS to Chairman)



Student-driven periodical

A way for you to express your ideas

Sir, What are your thoughts on launch of SCMS Vibes, a periodical by students?

A student-driven periodical is an excellent way for you to express your ideas, engage in critical thinking, and take ownership of your academic journey. It will enhance our campus's intellectual environment and contribute to your overall growth as leaders and thinkers. I'm confident this will become a valuable tradition at SCMS, inspiring future students to continue fostering a culture of

excellence. I'm very pleased with this initiative.

As the founder of this esteemed institute what was your vision when you first started out?

My vision was to create an institution that prioritized quality education and holistic development, providing students with the skills and values needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world. I wanted to build a place where academic excellence and ethical values go hand in hand. We started with a small but committed

team, focusing on offering innovative and career-oriented programmes. The journey began with a clear mission to make a difference in the education sector, and over the years, through dedication and persistence, SCMS has grown into the institution it is today.

What is your vision for the future of SCMS?

My vision for SCMS now is to continue evolving as a leading educational institution that imparts knowledge and prepares students to be global citizens and

leaders. We aim to stay ahead of the curve by embracing innovation in education, expanding our international collaborations, and maintaining our commitment to academic excellence. I want SCMS to be a place where students are empowered to think critically, act ethically, and contribute meaningfully to society. As we move forward, my focus is on ensuring that SCMS remains a beacon of quality education and continues to make a positive impact on the world.

“Onam is a powerful reminder of the values that define us as a community”

Reshma Ann & Mahadevan K.R.

■ Dr. Radha Thevannoor

“To me, the essence of Onam lies in the sense of togetherness it fosters,” says Dr. Radha Thevannoor, Director SCMS group of Educational Institutions. Dressed in a traditional Onakodi and full of enthusiasm for the festival, Radha ma’am, as she is affectionately known by the students, reminisced about her childhood Onam, how the festival has changed over time and what it means for the students of her institute.

“This festival is not just about the grand feast or vibrant pookkalam; it is about reconnecting with loved ones and celebrating the bonds that tie us together,” she says. Radha ma’am was born and raised in Thiruvananthapuram. She moved to Kochi following her marriage in 1991.

Marked by simplicity

Onam celebrations of her childhood were “more tranquil” and offered a “culturally enriching experience.” “The capital city with its broad roads and lush greenery had an environment that was serene and the influence of the Travancore Royal Family connected the festival deeply to tradition,” she says adding that an enduring impression of her childhood Onam celebrations is one “marked by simplicity.”

“Entertainment options were limited; our primary source being Doordarshan broadcasts from Delhi, with Malayalam movies being a rare treat on Thiruvonam day. In those days, the joy of Onam was found in direct, face-to-face interactions, a stark contrast to today’s technology-driven celebrations where the essence of togetherness is often overshadowed by digital distractions,” she says.

One of the most exciting parts of Onam for her is the Onasadya, the amazing feast that showcases Kerala’s delicious food. “Over the years, the Onasadya has transformed from a simple meal to an elaborate spread, often featuring up to 32 different dishes. While Thiruvananthapuram is known for its avial and the unique ada payasam, a jaggery and rice-based sweet, Kochi takes pride in its palada payasam,” she says. These regional differences really show Kerala’s diverse culture and highlight the rich culinary traditions that



Group Director Dr. Radha Thevannoor and, below, Onam celebrations at SCMS, Muttom Campus.

have been passed down for generations.

According to her, dressing up for Onam has grown over the years, especially wearing the traditional Onam saree. “In my youth, it was uncommon to see young women wearing the Onam saree to college or public events. However, today, there is a renewed interest in embracing this traditional attire. This resurgence in traditional attire is a testament to the enduring appeal of Onam’s cultural roots,” she says.

Her favorite aspect of the festival is it being a time of “shared experiences.” She

recollects a time when three generations of her family would gather under one roof, sharing stories, laughter, and the joy of being together. “It is this shared experience that makes Onam special—a festival where the focus is on collective happiness and unity.”

In an academic setting, too, she believes that festivals like Onam contribute significantly. “Onam has always been a significant event at SCMS Institutions. Over the past decade, the festival has evolved, reflecting the changing demographics of the student body.”

Ten years ago, she remembers

An occasion of enjoyment and learning

“Festivals like Onam offer us the chance to dive into activities that are not only enjoyable but also educational. For instance, designing pookalam—a traditional floral arrangement—is a creative outlet that allows us to express our artistic side while learning about its cultural significance. Managing event budgets for Onam celebrations also teaches us practical skills in financial planning and organization, skills that are invaluable both personally and professionally. Through participating in these activities, one gains a deeper understanding of cultural traditions and the importance of community.”

a few North Indian students who remained on campus during the holidays and were introduced to Onam traditions, such as the Onasadya and visited the Thrikkakara temple. “These experiences left a lasting impression on them, fostering a deeper appreciation for Kerala’s rich cultural heritage.” Though she rues the fact that participation in traditional activities has waned over the years, yet, “Onam continues to be a vital part of the SCMS community, bringing students together in celebration and cultural exchange. Whether in the serene streets of Thiruvananthapuram or the lively neighborhoods of Kochi, the spirit of Onam remains a powerful reminder of the values that define us as a community,” she signs off.

(The writers are 1st year students of PGDM, Batch 33A)



Songs for Mahabali

Boat Songs

Onam is also a time when several other kinds of songs are sung besides Mahabali songs. Known as Vanchipattu or Boat songs, these are extremely popular for their rhythm and beat. Since the Snake Boat Race, or Vallamkali, is a prominent feature of the festival, these songs are even more significant during the celebrations. The big, decorative boats, chundan vallams, have a nice musical arrangement. Along with many vocalists, the boat carries seven drums. Musicians and singers take up seats in the middle of the boat. They give the oarsmen confidence and motivate them to row quickly. For thousands of spectators, boatmen perform a poetic extravaganza while rowing the boat to the beat of Vanchipattu.



Kuchelavrittham Vanchipattu is a well-known song sung by boatmen composed by Ramapurathu Warriar. Historians believe it was written during Marthanda Varma's reign, 1745 - 1750 AD.

Onam is a time when traditional songs are sung with enthusiasm.

Amrutha K. Menon

When Mahabali ruled the land

Everyone was equal

Happily, they lived

Danger befell none

There was no falsehood or fraud

And no untruth.

(Onam Folk Song)

This popular folk song celebrates the peace and joy that prevailed in the land of Mahabali when the mythical King ruled over Kerala. Malayalis continue to sing praises of their King and about the festival of Onam, which celebrates his annual visit to the State to be with his people.

The festival is observed with great passion and spirit. Various Malayalam (Keralan) folk and traditional songs are sung during the festival. Collectively, these songs are called Onappattu. The origin of the songs is unclear, but their popularity can be gauged by the fact that they have been passed down through generations and continue to be sung in the present with passion and as a sacred tradition.

Onappattu

“Onam is made more colorful by Onappattu. Watching young men and women sing beautiful melodies while wearing traditional clothing is a visual and auditory delight,” says a senior resident of Irinjalakuda

As Onam is celebrated to welcome the spirit of the legendary King Mahabali, most Onam songs are centered around him.



A Raja Ravi Varma work depicting Vamana, avatar of Lord Vishnu, and King Mahabali

A popular folk ballad, Maveli, praises the mythical King Mahabali's rule and is titled “Mahabali.” The language and lyrics of many songs suggest that they originated somewhere around the 16th and 17th centuries. Scholars point out that the songs are raw, and the refinement of lyrics happened much later. Whatever differences historians have over the origin and style of the songs, they clearly point to the musicality of the people of Kerala.

The titles of some songs refer to Maveli's kingdom of Onattukara or Mavelikkara in Central Travancore.

Special songs are sung in his praise on Thiruvonam, the last day of the 10-day Onam festival. It is believed that the spirit of Mahabali visits the State of Kerala on this day. The English version of an extremely popular song says, “Long live Maveli, the harbinger of peace and happiness”.

Inspired by the Oonjal

Another important component of Onam celebrations is the swing, or Oonjal, which is the basis of numerous folk tunes. For the event, both boys and girls dress in traditional clothes. They do Oonjalattom, or swing dancing, while singing Onappaattu. The swing, which is decorated with flowers that hang from tall branches, provides a unique sight and feeling.

The essence of these songs and traditions makes Onam the festival of the people, and it's not limited to one community or one part of Kerala. Malayalees around the world celebrate the festival with much joy and harmony.

Traditions like these — Onappattu, Vanchipattu, and Oonjal-inspired songs—bring us closer to our roots and bind us to our culture. No matter where one is in the world, Onam is a time to celebrate for the Malayali.

(The writer is doing her first year MBA)

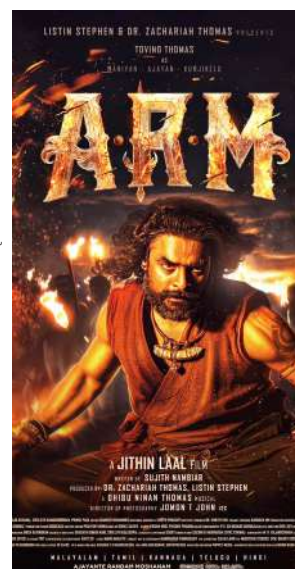
AT THE MOVIES



Kerala's most beloved festival, Onam is not just about grand feasts and vibrant celebrations. It's also a time when the Malayalam film industry pulls out all the stops to entertain the audience. This year, the festive season is set to witness an epic clash between two of Malayalam cinema's biggest stars. Two highly anticipated films, Tovino Thomas' *Ajayante Randam Moshanam* and Mohanlal's *Barroz*, are gearing up for a box office showdown during Onam 2024. Both films have generated immense buzz with their unique concepts and star power.

Ajayante Randam Moshanam

Tovino Thomas takes on a triple role in this historical drama directed by Jithin Laal. The film promises a visual spectacle with grand sets and elaborate action sequences.



Barroz

Mohanlal's fantasy adventure, directed by himself, is a visually stunning film with a blend of mythology and fantasy. The film's grand scale and Mohanlal's iconic presence have created a massive fan following. It is based on the novel *Barroz: Guardian of D'Gama's Treasure*.



Flower Power

Flower trade gets brisk as the auspicious occasion of Onam approaches.

George P. Jacob

Kerala, known for its vibrant festivals and rich cultural heritage, experiences a surge in flower trade as the auspicious occasion of Onam approaches. This annual celebration, symbolizing the return of King Mahabali, transforms the state into a kaleidoscope of colors. One of the most prominent decorations to welcome the beloved king is intricate pookkalam (flower carpets) that adorn the landscape. These floral displays created using a variety of local flowers like marigolds, jasmine, and hibiscus, feature magnificent designs and patterns. According to a report by The News Minute, around 400 tons of flowers, brought to Kerala from neighboring states are sold during the 10-day festival.

The flower market in Kochi, one of Kerala's major commercial hubs, becomes a hive of activity, with wholesalers and retailers working round the clock to meet the festive demand. Farmers and vendors



from regions like Kottayam, Alappuzha, and Wayanad report a dramatic surge in demand for their produce. "The festival of Onam is crucial for our livelihood," says Jithu KP, a flower grower from Aluva. It represents a season that significantly impacts his annual earnings. "We plan our cultivation, mainly vadamalli. (Bachelor's Button) around

this time, to ensure a bountiful harvest to meet the heightened demand," he adds. Jithu speaks about the high market value of flowers, which fetch premium prices, especially during Onam.

Farming flowers

Unlike cash crops, whose trade is affected by international trade policies and competition, flower cultivation isn't dependent on the global markets. Flowers also have a short growth cycle, allowing for quicker returns on investment.

However, the rise in demand also brings challenges. Flower prices shoot up during the festival due to the increased demand and the limited availability of certain varieties. In the weeks leading up to Onam, prices for popular flowers like marigold and jasmine can double. Sometimes the price shift ranges from ₹ 80 to 150, for marigold; jasmines skyrocketed from ₹ 750 to ₹ 2500 and strung jasmine cost

₹ 250 a metre. Meanwhile, a government initiative, launched a couple of years ago, to grow flowers locally has paid off. Kudumbashree, Kerala's poverty eradication and women empowerment mission, hopes to benefit during this year's harvest festival having grown a variety of blooms, mainly marigold.

However, the flower business during Onam is not just about trade, it is also a celebration of Kerala's cultural heritage. The artistry and the communal effort involved in creating Pookkalam highlights the role flowers play in this festival that involves one and all.

(The writer is a first year student of MBA, Batch 22)

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“Flowers have a short growth cycle, allowing for quicker returns”.

Flowers 24x7

Renju George established a 24X7 flower shop, Pushpavadi flower decorations, at Keltron Junction, Aroor, 18 years ago. According to him, prices and volume double and sometimes even triple during Onam season. His main business during Onam is from pookkalam competitions in schools, corporate firms and government organisations. "We practically sell out during Atham," says a shop assistant, adding that they specialize in exotic and moderately priced flower arrangements for all seasons, occasions and events. "The best quality flowers like white, yellow, and orange jamanthi, vadamalli, Mullappoo and rose uthiru are brought from Hosur, Dindigal, Bangalore, and Coimbatore and Mysore. "Nobody should face the unavailability of flowers," says Renju, whose passion for flowers started at the age of 16, when he worked at his relative's flower shop. (The writer is pursuing MBA)

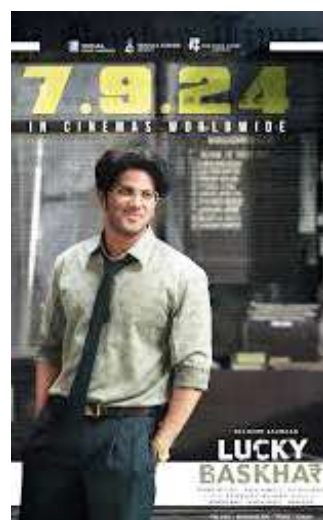
Kondal

Kondal is directed by Ajit Mampally and starring Antony Varghese Pepe, Raj B. Shetty, and Shabeer Kallarakkal. The film, produced by Sophia Paul is expected to bring a powerful cinematic experience to the Onam celebrations.



Lucky Baskhar

Lucky Baskhar, a Telugu drama thriller set in the 1980s, directed by Venky Atluri. Starring Dulquer Salmaan the film explores the mysterious wealth of a banker named Baskhar. The movie is marketed by Wayfarer Films



The Greatest of All Time

GOAT (The Greatest of All Time), a Tamil science fiction action film directed by Venkat Prabhu. Starring Vijay in dual roles alongside Prashanth, Prabhu Deva, the film delves into a tale of old secrets that resurface, unsettling a special anti-terrorist squad.



Where myth meets tradition

A Thrikkakara local, Vijai Bhaskar Pradip, describes his association with the Thrikkakara temple and explains why it is central to Onam festivities.



As a child, I used to visit the Thrikkakara temple every weekend with my mother. But during Onam, we went there daily. The temple is also known as Thrikkakara Vamanamoorthy temple and is closely linked to Onam, a big harvest celebration in Kerala. Legend has it that Lord Vamana, the fifth avatar of Lord Vishnu, sent King Mahabali to the underworld (patala) here, at the temple. This story is the basis for the Onam festival. On Thiruvonam day, which is the birthday of Lord Vishnu, Mahabali was allowed to visit his people in the month of Chingam. This led to the creation of the Onam festival.

Another tale connected to this temple is that Kapila Maharshi visited on hearing about Mahabali and asked Lord Vishnu to be the deity of the place, which was granted.

For the ten days of Onam, the temple becomes a hub of vibrant cultural activities, from dance performances by students and celebrities to

The abode of Mahabali

Thrakkakara was originally called Thrikkalkkara. It is said that Cheraman Perumal, the emperor of Kulasekharam, used to hold meetings of feudal kings at the Thrikkakara temple. These meetings took place during the festival season, from Thiruvonam Day in the month of Karkidakam to Thiruvonam Day in the month of Chingam. The 30-day festival ended with a 10-day Onam celebration starting from Atham day to Thiruvonam day in the month of Chingam. A total of 56 local kings, 64 village chieftains, and many nobles were invited to this event. When it became difficult for the kings to travel to Thrikkakara, the emperor declared that Onam should be celebrated in every home by displaying the deity of Thrikkakara. Onam festivities are said to have begun with Cheraman Perumal-Bhaskara Ravi Varma and later spread throughout the state. In the 12th century, the celebration of Onam took a hit because of some disagreements between the kings. But in 1921, Sreemoolam Thirunal gave the temple a makeover. Some folks say the Samoothiris kept the Athachamayam celebration going until 1756. Despite all that history, people still believe that Mahabali's spirit lives there.

traditional games. I remember the colorful Pookalam and the delicious Sadya (traditional feast) served at the temple during the festival.

One of the highlights of the celebration is the Onasadya, served to thousands of

devotees. I've heard that when the festival starts at Thrikkakara temple, many people living nearby don't cook at home; they prefer to have their meals at the temple. Traditional art forms like Kathakali, Thiruvathira, and

Pulikkali performed on the temple grounds add to the festive spirit.

The Onam festivities kick off with Athachamayam, a lively parade with elephants, floats, and traditional dancers. Then there's Pookkalam, a competition to see who can make the most attractive flower carpet using flowers, leaves, and other natural stuff.

And of course, the Onasadya. The temple gets all dolled up with fancy flower decorations, and the deity gets decked out in special jewelry.

Vamanamoorthy Homam is a special ritual done to make Lord Vamana happy and get his blessings. The temple is also famous for its ancient inscriptions that tell us about Kerala's past. The architecture is a mix of Kerala and Tamil styles, with a tower and a big tank.

(The writer is a student of PGDM Batch, 33)

The Onam LOOK

Dressing for Onam is all about celebrating Kerala.

Niranjana Raj

Early Onam fashion harks back to a time when the festival was not about commercialism. It was about simplicity, elegance, and being deeply connected with Kerala's cultural traditions. Women wore kasavu sarees, a staple off white cotton with a gold border; men sported similar colors, opting for gold-bordered off



white mundu paired with a white shirt. Little girls wore pattupavada, a two-piece outfit that consists of a long skirt and a blouse, in a similar cream and gold combination. Women enhanced their gear with gold jewelry and flowers.

Present-day Onam fashion carries forward the gold and white color scheme but has

incorporated modern styles and trends.

"We love the idea of a kasavu that can multitask into our modern yet quirky lives of today," says designer Sreejith Jeevan of Rouka, a design line that celebrates ethnic Kerala wear. His latest collection of Kasavu sarees highlights the flowers and leaves of Kerala.

Kerala sarees have come a long way and have hand blockprints, mural paintings, cut work, embroidery, and mirror work on them. They are available in different materials, with a mix of synthetic, silk, or viscose. Blouses too have kept pace and have mirror work, sequins, or appliques on them. Sarees are paired with shirts or T-shirts too!

The House of Vandy takes it up a notch with their wildlife-themed blouse that features Kerala flora and fauna. The majestic elephant, coconut palms, arecanut trees, banana leaves, frangipani blossoms, and the Greater Racket-tailed Drongo are celebrated on the blouse.

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Celebrating Made In India

SCMS alumna, Anupama Roy celebrates traditional Indian craftsmanship in her Onam collection

“My college journey was nothing short of transformative,” says Anupama Roy, a proud SCMS alumna. After earning her MBA in 2006, Anupama set up a ladies ethnic wear boutique, Blocks & Prints, in 2017, at Pathadipalam in Edappally. This season she has brought out a special Onam collection, which, is “a testament to the enduring beauty of traditional Indian craftsmanship,” she says.

Quitting a teaching job, to follow her passion Anupama’s leap of faith was the beginning of a beautiful journey that brings together artisans, weavers and printers from across the country. She finds joy in the collaborative process that brings vibrant prints to life.

Floral dawani sets

The Onam collection ranges from floral dawani sets to block-printed skirts and

blouses, combining tradition with innovation. Each piece showcases the festive spirit of Onam while staying true to the store’s ethos of quality and craftsmanship. The printed Kerala sarees are noteworthy, for their unique twist—tribal prints on the traditional fabric and add a fresh perspective to an age-old tradition.

Shaped by SCMS

Anupama looks back at her time in SCMS as one that shaped her. “The rigorous activities and training programmes were instrumental in honing my leadership skills. Being an active participant in seminars and intercollegiate events, I absorbed valuable lessons that continue to guide me,” she says.

Blocks & Prints is located in Pathadipalam, Edappally.

(Follow her on @ @blocksandprints)



For those who prefer convenience, the pre-pleated and stitched sarees are available. For the adventurous, western-inspired Onam dressing, style a Kasavu saree skirt or cream and gold Palazzo pants with a crop top.

Menswear

Menswear too has come a long way. The colored mundu, elastic waist mundus, and printed kara mundus are paired with cool Goan-designed shirts or simple black or checkered shirts. The mural-painted Kathakali face, blending cultural with contemporary style on shirt, is a new motif in menswear.

If apparel is changing, can jewelry be far behind? Wearing antique and temple-design necklaces with multicolored kuppi vala (glass bangles) is in vogue. The Onam look is also about wearing a big bindhi, adding a touch of Lotus or Tulsi in the hair, and accessorizing with matching bags, watches, and footwear.

(The writer is a student of PGDM Batch, 33 B)

Festival Colours

Up on a swing

In many Kerala households, setting up a swing (Oonjal) is an essential part of Onam preparations. Decorated swings are installed at many homes and public spaces during Onam. According to legend, King Mahabali, who is revered during Onam, is said to have introduced the tradition of swinging as a form of entertainment. Swings are also seen as a symbol of the cyclical nature of life and the ups and downs that come with it, reflecting the themes of Onam. Swings add to the festive atmosphere, with people of all ages enjoying the joy of swinging amidst the celebrations. In fact swinging is a beloved activity throughout the festival.



Thiruvathira Kali



Thiruvathira Kali is a traditional folk dance performed by women, characterized by circular movements and rhythmic hand clapping. The dance is accompanied by traditional Kerala music and instruments like the *thavil*, *maddalam*, and *ilathalam*. Participants wear traditional Kerala attire, including mundu, neriyathu, and ornaments. Both Thiruvathira Kali and Onam foster community bonding, with people coming together to celebrate and participate in traditional activities.

The Tiger Dance

Pulikkali, sometimes referred to as Kaduvakali, is a distinctive and alluring traditional folk art form from Kerala. Hindu mythology tales, mainly those from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, are narrated in this lively and colorful dance spectacle. “Tiger dance” is the direct translation of “pulikkali” in Malayalam. Entertainers dress in vibrant costumes and paint themselves in elaborate colors and patterns resembling tigers. Rhythmic music, dynamic movements and acrobatic feats define the dance. Pulikkali is usually presented at the Onam celebration.



Boat race

Boat races are an integral part of Onam celebrations. Vallamkali is a traditional boat race held during the Onam festival. The race features long, narrow boats called “Chundans” or “Snake boats”, which are up to 100 feet long and have a capacity of 100 rowers. Rowers paddle to the rhythm of traditional songs, creating a mesmerizing spectacle. Teams from different villages compete, showcasing their skill and strength. According to legend, the boat races are a re-enactment of the mythological event where Lord Vishnu, in his fifth avatar as Vamana, saved King Mahabali from the depths of the ocean. The boat races symbolize the cultural heritage and pride of Kerala. The Aranmula Boat Race is one of the oldest and the most famous one. Another prominent boat race is the, Nehru Trophy Boat Race, which is held on the Punnamada lake.



(Photo Essay: Curated by Vaishnav VT, a student of PGDM Batch 33)

Rebuilding Wayanad

We are together on Onam just as we were together to help the families affected by the July 2024, Wayanad Disaster. Let's rebuild lives and Nature sustainably, says, Tessa Jaison

Onam symbolizes the spirit of communal togetherness. This year, though we go through the traditional festivities, our hearts and minds are with the families affected by the Wayanad disaster.

On the morning of July 30, 2024, heavy rains collapsed hillsides in Wayanad, destroying everything below and triggering a series of landslides, one of the deadliest in Kerala's history. As many as 336 people lost their lives, 397 were injured and 78 are missing. The State Government has rightly called off all public celebrations in the wake of the tragedy. The tragedy has trained the light on human-induced environmental damage.

Susceptible to landslides

According to the Indian Landslide Susceptibility Map, over 31% of Wayanad is very highly susceptible to landslides.

Located in the Western Ghats mountain range, Wayanad consists of faulted and eroded mountain edges of the Deccan Plateau. Landslides occurred in Punjirimattom, Mundakkai, Chooralmala, and Vellarimala villages in Meppadi Panchayat, Vythiri Taluk. The landslide struck near the origin of the Iruvanjippuzha River, between the villages of Punjirimattom and Mundakkai, sweeping away both villages. This was followed by a second landslide, which diverted the Iruvanjippuzha River, causing flash floods that washed away the entire Chooralmala village. The National Remote Sensing Centre analyzed satellite imagery and released their findings which revealed that approximately 930,000 sq ft of land had moved down the hill. Some factors that contributed



to the landslides in Wayanad are Geological factors, unchecked human interventions and the unpredictability of Climate Change induced weather conditions.

The Western Ghats Ecology

The disaster has had a significant impact on the local community, with many people losing their homes and livelihoods. The government of Kerala established relief camps and provided financial

recommended that all Western Ghats be notified as ESAs (ecologically sensitive areas). The Kasturirangan committee report (2013), however, reduced the extent of ESAs to 37 percent of the Western Ghats.

Coming to this happy time of Onam I can say with pride that each and every Keralite rallied to support the families affected by the disaster. There was no politics and no differences between people and the government. More than 100 crore rupees were collected in the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund (CMDRF)

At SCMS two initiatives, 'Let's Join Our Hands for Wayanad' and 'Wayanad Relief Material Collection' were undertaken immediately. Relief materials and money were raised to purchase essential items for the relief camps.

We were one through this dark hour as we stand as one on this beautiful occasion of Onam. What next? Rebuilding – not only the lives of the survivors but also of Nature. Let's start from scratch. Let's unlearn and learn again. Let's afforest. Let Gadgil Report be discussed again. Let the rebuilding and development this time be sustainable.

(Tessa Jaison is studying for a BSc in Biotechnology, Semester 5. The content in the tabloid is AI-assisted.)



Students of PGDM Batch 33 collected relief material for the families affected by the Wayanad tragedy

Expert Panel led by renowned Ecologist Madhav Gadgil brought out a report in 2011 that had specifically warned against anti-environmental activities indiscriminate quarrying and construction activities- in Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs)- in Meppadi in Vythiri taluk where Mundakkai, Chooralmala, Attamala, and Noolpuzha villages were wiped out.

assistance to the affected families. The disaster also highlighted the need for better disaster management and preparedness in the region. Ecologist Madhav Gadgil has said that the natural disaster in Wayanad was man-made and could have been avoided if authorities had implemented his proposals for the conservation of the Western Ghats. His report