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WALTAIR TIMES

Vol. 26 | Issue 1 | December 2021



House Journal of The Waltair Club, Visakhapatnam



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From the President's Desk



PRESIDENT

DR.S.V.H.RAJENDRA R-285
9848192607

VICE-PRESIDENT

MR.T.V.THIMMAYYA GANDHI G-052
9246640024

HON.SECRETARY

MR.V.K.VISWESWARA RAO V-101
9908849999

HON.TREASURER

MR.V.KAMARAJU K-159
9849766622

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

ENTERTAINMENT

K.S.R.K.RAJU S-648
9848185679

GENERAL SERVICES

AKKINA SEKHAR BABU S-699
9849199906

SPORTS

K.KIRTHI VINAYAK K-160
9618912349

BAR

KOSURI SRINIVASA S MURTHY M-231
9000046464

LIBRARY & CHAMBERS

VIJAYA MOHAN TALASILA V-254
9440190111

CATERING

DEEPAK MANU MENDA D-099
9949118000

LADIES CHAIRPERSON

MISS.VINEESHA VALSARAJ V-422
8500099666

Dear members,

Greetings to you all !

As we begin a New Year in Waltair Club, thank all our esteemed members for bestowing their belief in me to lead as the President of our Club. Congratulations to Mr.Phaneendra Babu and his team for successful completion of their term year 2020-2021 inspite of the pandemic lock down constraints.

The dedicated and passionate team of Executive and Managing Committee are my pillars of strength. We will endeavour to explore new avenues of opportunities in serving our members.

In this journey with my team, following the guidelines, we will create all possibilities to serve the members to their utmost satisfaction. Friendship, bonding within members and to create a harmonious place for every member to enjoy will be the top most priority to make the Club one big family, where each member has the sense of involvement and togetherness.

Complements of the season and a Happy New Year

Dr.S.V.H.RAJENDRA



Vice President's Message

Dear Members,

I am very happy to be with you with this Waltair Times as Chairman of the Editorial Board.

First I must convey my sincere thanks to all the Members of our Century old Waltair Club for giving me this opportunity by electing me to the Vice President.

It is a great honour for me to serve the Club by fulfilling the duties of Vice-President and also with the co-operation of Managing Committee and Members of the Club.

I invite members to give their suggestions for the betterment of both our Club and Waltair Times.

I thank Mrs.Parveen Hosain (P-156) for agreeing to be the Editor of the Magazine and also thank Mr.Vijaya Kumar Atmakuri (V-48), Mrs.Sandhya Godey (R-185) and Mrs.C.Nirupama (C-63) for agreeing to assist me in bringing out a colorful magazine with useful information in our Waltair Times. I Request members to contribute articles, short stories etc., to our magazine.

My hearty greetings to all the Members for upcoming festive Season.

Wish you all a Happy New Year

Yours Sincerely,

T.V.Thimmayya Gandhi

M.No.G-052

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Hon. Secretary's Message

Dear Members,

Greeting to you all.

First of all, I would like to heartfully thank each one of you for your overwhelming support and for reposing such confidence in me. It gives me great motivation to work with commitment and responsibility for the further advancement of the club.

With a visionary president who is also passionate and a very enthusiastic and promising committee beside me, I look forward to fulfilling the promises we made by delivering an honest and transparent administration this year

Furthermore, the past few years have been challenging for everyone, and we all have been suffering in ways unimaginable. But I believe we can overcome the ongoing and any emerging challenges with our strong resilience and efforts just like before.

Despite the unprecedented times, I believe that our managing committee will be dedicated to the improvement of the club amenities and in solving the member's grievances to the best of their ability and ultimately to delivering a safe, fun-filled and entertaining year to our members.

Most importantly, we have set some realistic objectives lined up for the further progression of the club and its functioning. We are working towards reducing the running costs of the kitchen and wherever possible for the benefit of the members. Rationalization of the administration and accountability are a other significant factors on my agenda.

As affirmed, I guarantee that I will work diligently to live up to the expectations of everyone while maintaining the dignity and decorum of the club. I also would like to assure you that I will be available on the club premises and dedicate my best hours.

I seek your valuable support and suggestions for the successful execution of our plans and the smooth functioning of the club. Wishing you all a very happy festive season ahead.

Best Regards,

V.K. Visweswara Rao. (Visu Valluri)



From the Treasurer's Desk

My Mission

My Commitment

I am here to say my heartfelt thanks to all the members of this grand club, by just electing me unanimously.

It is a honour to be the unanimous choice. It is an echo of the members of the club, for the choice. Thank you all my friends, elders and youth the future of the club.

Basically I am a business person, knows the intricacies and the knowledge of accountability of finances. I am here to work for the club and during my tenure, I am sure you can have the trust in me, there will be absolute transparency with our club's treasure. Let me do the job, at the end of the tenure, you may see the sea of change. I promise I do.

The former committee members did a good job to the best possible way of means and merits.

I could, I would, sure, try to excel, better than the best. It is my mission to adopt and implement sure I can and also "we can" together.

Finances are the foremost to run the comforts and interests of the club members.

I count and spend, if need arises, and save for the future, for future developments.

The club has got beautiful buildings to maintain. Better to live in good ambience and uphold the dignity and decorum. I try not just try, I will tie-up the loose ends, if any.

Not to be spendthrift, but to spin the treasury for the future generations of club members and their children to rule and enjoy the great grandeur - The Waltair Club.

I Remain.

V.Kamaraju M.No.K-159

Committee members' Reports



ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE:

Dear Member, please accept warm greetings.....

I am grateful to you all for your valuable support, and to vote in my favour and elect me as a Committee Member of the prestigious Waltair Club.

I also express my deep and heartfelt gratitude to the President for appointing me as Chairman of Entertainment Committee. I feel it great honor.

Due to the pandemic, elections were delayed and part of my tenure is already over. However, I assure you that I would stand up to

your expectations in respect of formulating innovative entertainment programs and leave no stone unturned to make you all happy and entertained in the remaining term of my post.

Working with zeal and creating zest would be hallmarks of my efforts and I sincerely seek your support and blessings to carry out all my responsibilities.

I heartily welcome new ideas and innovative suggestions to make entertainment programs more enchanting and more exciting.

I once again thank you for your valuable support.....

K.S.R.K.Raju, M.No.S-648

Chairman

Mr. K.S.R .K. RAJU

S-648

Members

Mr. Sudheer Mulagada

S-597

Mr. T.Veer Kumar

V-443

Mrs. M. S.P.Divya Das

D-093

Mr. Rohit Sarparapu

R-709

Mr.T.Rajesh Kumar

R-383

Mrs. Kanakavalli Ramgopal

R-051

Mrs.D.Usha Reddy

R-065

GENERAL SERVICES:



Undoubtedly, the responsibility of general services is not just a rough sail on the high seas, but a vast ocean of possibilities and choices.

I am glad and thankful that the President has accepted my choice. It is challenging. Yet, I have the grit, energy and time to fulfill the obligations, as General Services a wide angled bioscope. It extends from the minutest of detail to the monumental structures of the Club. Some renovated, some standing tall in grace, we have magnificent Mahals and buildings which stand stall to represent Waltair club to us. I will strive to maintain and preserve them with the same glory that they signify.

The green revolution of the club is phenomenal, especially after the HUDHUD devastation. We were able to restore the green environs in no time.

I will definitely try further improve the green cover, to cover up small patches in a beautiful way ensuring everything is right in its place and function.

Few days after I assumed my assignment, I was playing, hide and seek, all over our woods. Some club members wondered what I was up to! Once the little work was done, (an amazing work of pruning the Trees, thanks to our gardeners), it totally transformed the look of our Club. Brilliant illumination showcasing the beauty of our tall trees and little shrubs with colourful flowers, enhanced the total facade.

Not an end at all, we have time and scope to do much more, to create an ambience which is comforting, soothing and relaxing.

The structures and roads, will also be attended to, in the standards of the grace and splendour of our club.

I hope to achieve a lot more in the interest and the development of the club with the support of my Team.

Truly Yours.

A.Sekhar Babu, M.No.S-699

Chairman

Mr. A. Sekhar Babu

S-699

Members

Mr. J.M.M. Chowdary

M-116

Mr. N.S.R. Bapuji

B-102

Mr.M. Durga Prasada Rao

D-074

Mr. Nagendra Kantimahanti

N-200

SPORTS COMMITTEE



I sincerely thank everyone who supported me directly or indirectly and helped me win, and congratulate my fellow team members as well. I'll do my best towards my duty which has been allotted (sports) and will improve further where every member can use and enjoy the sport

activities to the fullest. Love to get your ideas and thoughts for further developments.

K.Kirthi Vinayak, M.No.K-160

Chairman	Mr. Kirthi Vinayak	K-160
Members		
Cricket:	1. Mr. G.Srinivas Reddy (Teddy)	S-840
	2. Mr. Vikram Tatineni	V-402
	3. Mr. M. Kranthi Kiran	S-566
	4. Mr. Pavan Potluri	P-265
	5. Mr. D.S. Raju (Sirish)	S-1257
	6. Mr. Akhil Kolagotla	A-342
Volley Ball:	1. Mr.T.Sreedhar	S-990
	2. Mr. C.V. Mallikarjun Varma	M-211
	3. Mr. K. Jagan Mohan	J-091
Gym:	1. Mr. L. Surendra	S-908
	2. Mr. K. Avinash	A-190
Swimming:	1. Mr. Aditya Muppidi	A-287
Tennis:	1. Mr. G. Veera Mohan	V-088
Squash:	1. Mr. Nilesh Killa	N-086
Yoga:	1. Sri Divya Potluri	P-265
Shuttle:	1. Mr. Viraj Polisetty	V-355
	2. Mr. Vikranth .H	V-266
	3. Mr.K.Sree Rama Gupta	S-457
	4. Mr.V.Venkata Kiran Kumar	K-290
T.T.:	1. Mr. Maneesh Agarwal	M-133
Chess:	1. Mr. P. Kumar	K-113
Carroms:	1. Mr. K. Ravi	S-1150
Kabaddi:	1. Mr. K. Mohit	M-287
Walking / Running:		
	1. Mr. D. Manik Raj	M-248
	2. Mr. P. Pramod Kumar	P-126
Throw Ball:	1.Mrs. Tanya Idnani	H-153
	2.Mrs.M.Tripura	T-090
Football:	1.Mr. C.Balyashish	B-166
	2. Mr. Kodidasu Sai Ravi Teja	S-1164
Snookers:	1. Mr.M.Kalyana Chakravarthy	K-262
	2. Mr. E. Subba Rao	S-938
Bridge:	1. Rajiv Dhawan	R-70

CHAIRMAN, LIBRARY & CHAMBERS COMMITTEE:

THE CHAMBERS:

Usage of Chambers by members has been disrupted this past year due to Covid and average occupancy has decreased compared to previous years. As the situation is improving more members are using the facility for their stays and to perform marriages and functions of



family members in the Club. To this end, we will look into all areas of the facilities to improve to provide better services for members. We will put procedures in place to complete any pending works and improve maintenance wherever necessary as well as improve food and beverage service for the members. Our goal will be to keep our members satisfied with their stay in Chambers.

LIBRARY:

Efforts will be made to make any necessary changes to improve the facilities to attract wider usage by members and member children. This could include keeping current with ordering magazines and books of interest to the members, any changes required in infrastructure or operation timings to make the facility more comfortable to members. Programs for children to draw them to spend time in the library will be reviewed.

Vijaya Mohan Talasila V-254

Chairman	Mr. Vijaya Mohan Talasila	V-254
Members		
Chambers:	1. Mr. A. Krishna Kumar	K-056
	2. Mr. Sreedhar Talasila	S-990
	3. Mr. Rajendra Kumar Jain	R-238
Library :	1. Mr.K. Kamaraju	K-022
	2.Mr.V.R.R.M.Babu	R-099

BAR COMMITTEE



Thanking you all members for the trust placed in this Committee. The first major hurdle for this Committee to ensure that our Club gets our regular Liquor License. We have already started putting in efforts towards the same. Meanwhile, we will still continue to provide the services in our Main Building and during all our Entertainment events. We request the cooperation and understanding of all members to abide by the rules and not to violate them under any circumstances.

Our aim is to provide the Liquor facility at all venues in the club, and to revive the services at par if not better to the pre Covid days. We together will work towards providing a happy club environment to ensure that we live up to the phrase 'home away from home'.

Kosuri Srinivasa S Murthy, M.No.M-231

Chairman **MR. K. Srinivasa S. Murthy M-231** Members

1	Mr. V. Kiran Kumar	K-079
2	Mr. D.V.S.K. Chakravarthy	C-093
3	Mr. Madhur Mittal	M-266
4	Mr. B. Hari Venkata Krishna	H-157
5	Mr. D. Manik Raj	M-248
6	Mr. V. Srijan Babu	S-896

CATERING COMMITTEE:

Dear Member,

Greetings!!!

Firstly, thank you for electing me and giving me an opportunity to serve.

I've been entrusted with the Food Committee and surely will strive to give my best. We surely are working on getting a few classics back and also introducing new dishes.

Your feedback would surely encourage and help us.

Once again, thank you.

Best always,



Deepak Manu Menda M.No.D-99

Chairman **Mr. Deepak Manu Menda D-099**

Members

1	Dr. Ch.Raghu Nandan Prasad	R-261
2	Mr. Chandrakanth Nangelia	C-073
3	Mr. Harish Deepak Idnani	H-153
4	Mr. Hanumantu Vikranth	V-266
5	Dr.Y.Jawahar	J-035
6	Mr. D.Krishna Prasad	K-117

LADIES COMMITTEE:

I thank the management committee for appointing me as the chairperson of the ladies committee of Waltair club.

I am truly grateful for this opportunity to be heading this committee. I know that the last two years have been very difficult for most of us, both mentally and physically. But, as they say nothing lasts forever, we are going to come out stronger as people and as a community.

Me and my sub committee takes immense pride in hosting for the coming year. The kids of Waltair our special to us and we start our first event of the ladies committee by hosting a Christmas party on 24th December with lots of fun games & entertainment.

Followed by a sports event for kids & ladies in the coming months. We will also be hosting a farmer's market and our very famous Sunday bazaar, and many more events await.

My team and I will put in our best efforts to make these events wonderful and enjoyable for the Waltair club members, and we hope each one of you join us to make it successful and a memorable year.

Thank you.



Vineesha Valsaraj M.No.V-422

Chairperson Ms. Vineesha Valsaraj		V-422			
Members					
1	Ms. Sadaf Mehdi	M-242	15	Mrs. Madhavi Garuda	R-311
2	Mrs. Gayatri Gottumukkala	G-127	16	Mrs. Tanya Indrani	H-153
3	Mrs. Nitya Oza	N-179	17	Mrs. Abhignya Grandhi	R-510
4	Mrs. Lakshmi Vobbilisetty	L-043	18	Mrs. Meghana Oza	S-291
5	Mrs. Divya Das	D-093	19	Mrs. Meenakshi Anantram	A-082
6	Ms. Deepika Das	I-026	20	Mrs. Jeeja Valsaraj	V-130
7	Mrs. Sunitha Rani	G-100	21	Ms. Tanvi Somani	T-065
8	Mrs. Niharika Mittal	M-266	22	Mrs. Sabah Shaad Mehdi	S-783
9	Mrs. Archana Gupta	N-125	23	Mrs.G.Subhashini	B-095
10	Mrs. V. Mary Virginia	J-111	24	Mrs.V.Kanaka Priya	K-079
11	Ms. Bhavya Cherukuri	B-138	25	Mr.Prerna Myadam	R-520
12	Mrs. Sakshi Anumolu	S-514	26	Mrs.Sweta Joshi	S-1251
13	Mrs. Srujana Penmatsa	V-191	27	Mrs.K.Vanditha Dutt	S-667
14	Mrs. T.N. Ratna	G-052			

Programmes for December, 2021			
10.12.2021	Friday	Movie	6:30 PM
17.12.2021	Friday	Movie	6:30 PM
18.12.2021	Saturday	Tambola	7:30 PM
24.12.2021	Friday	Christmas Party	4.30 PM
25.12.2021	Saturday	Movie	6:30 PM
31.12.2021	Friday	New Year Eve	
07.01.2022	Friday	Movie	6:30 PM
09.01.2022	Sunday	Beer n Biryani	12:00 Noon
14.01.2022	Friday	Bhogi Celebrations (morning)	
		Movie (Evening)	6:30 PM
15.01.2022	Saturday	Tambola	7:30 PM
21.01.2022	Friday	Movie	6:30 PM
26.01.2022	Wednesday	Republic Day Flag Hoisting	9:00 AM
28.01.2022	Friday	Movie	6:30 PM

From the Editor's Desk

It's a great honour and responsibility to take forward the Baton of Editorship, of our prestigious In- house Journal "Waltair Times".

Extremely thankful for the support of The President of the club, Dr.S V H Rajendra, Vice President Mr. T V Thimmayya Gandhi and the Hon. Secretary, Mr.V. K Visweswara Rao for their immediate concurrence of support.

Very Grateful to Mr. Vijay Atmakuri, Ms. Sandhya Godey & Ms. C Nirupama for readily accepting to be a part of The Editorial Team and I am sure that with their efforts and ideas, we should be able to bring forth enjoyable and informational reading.

To recount and relive the cherished memories of events and activities that have been conducted or are planned in the future, is a pleasurable read for many of us, for whom our club is almost our second Home. There is definitely a close connect and joy when we go thru the Magazine.

In the forthcoming tenure as well, we hope to keep up the attention of readers with interesting articles, candid descriptions of events and every relevant/ required information of members. In addition, articles on Members Hobbies and Talents, anecdotes of the Club from the past Executive and staff, original compositions of member experiences and Health related information pertinent to the times are some of our broad guidelines which we would try and incorporate in the Magazine.

We welcome contributions from all members. Request members, who wish to contribute articles or news to the Waltair Times, to please email @: parveenhosain14@gmail.com.

Wishing the newly constituted Team of Waltair Club and the Sub Committees, a very successful tenure. Hope that with the turn of the Year, we look forward to more normal times and many more pleasant celebrations and events!!

Stay Healthy, Stay safe! Be happy, Be Positive!!

Parveen Z Hosain

M.No.P-156



EDITORIAL BOARD

Chairman

Mr.T.V.Thimmayya Gandhi G-052

Editor

Mrs.Parveen Z Hosain P-156

Members:

Mr.Vijaya Kumar Atmakuri V-048

Mrs.Sandhya Godey R-185

Mrs.C.Nirupama C-063



WALTAIR CLUB LADIES COMMITTEE

Presents

WINTER WONDERLAND

Christmas Party

24th December

4:30 PM Onwards

Venue : Jubilee Deck, Waltair Club

Performance By The Children Of Waltair Club

Fancy Dress Competition

Age: (3-5years) (6-9years) (10-14years)

Christmassy
Tambola

Meet Santa
Claus

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Waltair Club Tambola Winners



1st Prize Winner - Mrs.B.Ratna Kumari
W/o. Mr.B.Srinivasa Rao (M.No.S-226)



2nd Prize Winner - Mr.B.Ramakrishna (M.No.R-505)



3rd Prize Winner - Mrs.Ch.Sushma
W/o. Mr.C.V.Mallikarjun Varma (M.No.M-211)



4th Prize Winner - Mrs.Uma Devi
W/o. Mr.V.K.Visweswara Rao (M.No.V-101)

5TH PRIZE - MRS.K.SAILUSHA
W/O.K.VENKATA AVINASH (A190)
AND
MR.NAVEEN KUMAR (N-255)

6TH PRIZE
MR.K.V.V.SATYANARAYANA (S-290)
AND
MR.K.ABHISHEK (A-355)

Mrs.V.Uma Devi W/o.V.K.Visweswara Rao (Hon.Secretary) has donated her prize money an amount of Rs.5,000/- to staff welfare fund of our Club.

SPEED LIMIT

Further to our earlier information, requesting to maintain speed limit below **20KMPH** within all areas of the Club. It is noticed that some persons are still violating the same. Kindly adhere with the above speed limit in the Club premises. Voilation is causing inconvenience to the senior / lady members

Member Honour

1) Mr V S Rao our member S-462 was elected as a council member of Southern Zone of Institution of Technical Arbitrators for a period of two years from 2019 to 2021, He is one of the four members elected from the Southern States. Mr V S Rao General Manager (Retd) of HPCL is a recipient of national and state awards in engineering and also member of several professional bodies besides Arbitration councils.



2) Ms. Alana Meenakshi Kolagatla D/o Mr. Madhu Kolagatla (M.No.M-109) a 10 year old in the World No.2 Chess Player in the girls U-10 category. She reached with G. Chiranjeevi from when she was five years old and practises 6-8 hours per day and upto 14 hours during Tournaments. Her mother Mrs. Aparna was State U-9 Champion in 1989-90. As they say, the legacy continues....

Waltair Screens

ON 26.11.2021 @ 06:30 pm
FRIDAY TELUGU MOVIE

PELLI SANDHADI

Starring: **ROSHAN MEKA**
SREE LEELA

FRIDAY HINDI MOVIE
ON 10-12-2022 @ 6:30 PM

SOORYAVANSHI

STARRING: AKSHAY KUMAR, KATRINA KAIF,
AJAY DEVGAN, HANVEER SINGH

WALT AIR CLUB
17.12.2021 @ 06:30 pm
FRIDAY TELUGU MOVIE

REPUBLIC

Starring: **SAI DHARAM TEJ**
AISHWARYA RAJESH
RAMYA KRISHNA

Obituary

We regret to announce the sad demise of the following members.



MR.D.N.SINHA
(M.NO.S-108) EXPIRED ON
20.11.2021



DR.C.SADASIVA RAO
(M.NO.S-342) EXPIRED ON
05.12.2021



MR.L.PREMA SAGAR
(M.NO.P-75) EXPIRED
ON 26.11.2021

Wills Pub Nite

The Management Committee reopened the Wills Pub on a trial basis on the 27th November, 2021. Live Band enthralled the Members with foot tapping music and the members enjoyed the evening and were extremely happy to be back in the Wills Pub after a long gap. Based on member participation, this event may be conducted every Saturday.



CHAMPIONS

SPORTS FIESTA 2022

<https://thewaltairclubsportsfiesta2022.club/>

- VOLLEYBALL
- BASKET BALL
- CRICKET
- FOOT BALL
- TENNIS
- SKATING
- TABLE TENNIS
- SHUTTLE
- SQUASH
- CARROMS
- PAINTING
- RANGOLI
- CHESS
- THROW BALL
- GOLF
- KABADDI
- TUG OF WAR
- GYM
- YOGA
- RUNNING
- KIDS SPORTS
- WALKING
- BILLIARDS
- SNOOKERS
- CHEF COMPETITION
- BRIDGE



Registrations Opens Upto DEC 30th
ONLY FOR MEMBERS



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THE WALT AIR CLUB

SPORTS FIESTA 2021-22

END OF REGISTRATION ON 30TH DEC



Audi
Visakhapatnam

• JAN 4TH AUCTION FOR CRICKET • JAN 5TH AUCTION FOR VOLLEY BALL • JAN 6TH AUCTION FOR THROW BALL

VOLLEYBALL	JAN 21 st , 22 nd & 23 rd
TENNIS	JAN 23 rd - JAN 30 th
CRICKET	JAN 28 th , 29 th & 30 th
VOLLEYBALL SENIORS	FEB 5 th
BASKETBALL	FEB 7 th
CARROMS / CHESS / SQUASH / TABLE TENNIS	JAN 23 rd - JAN 30 th
SHUTTLE	FEB 1 st & 2 nd OR 2 nd & 3 rd <small>Categories: Under-12, Under-16 boys and girls Singles and doubles, Open: 40+, 50+, 60+.</small>
SNOOKERS	FEB 1 st - FEB 16 th
YOGA	FEB 5 th
GYM	FEB 5 th & 6 th

TRACK EVENTS	Ladies & Kids - Running, Walking, Tug of War, Shot Put, Lemon & Spoon and Sack Race, Painting - Feb 6 th Evening. <small>*Cycling must bring their own cycles.</small>	FEB 1 st & 2 nd OR 2 nd & 3 rd
GENTS RUNNING, WALKING & CYCLING	Cycling must bring their own cycles.	FEB 6 th MORNING
LADIES - COOKING MORNING & RANGOLI EVENING		FEB 6 th
GOLF: CHIP AND PUTT		FEB 7 th
FOOTBALL		FEB 7 th & 8 th
THROW BALL		FEB 11 th - FEB 12 th
SWIMMING		FEB 13 th
KABADDI		FEB 17 th
KIDS SPORTS & PLAYING CARDS BRIDGE		

MAIN EVENT-FEB 18TH

In a Holiday Spirit

Hear the words "Joy, Gifts, Lights, Decorations, Holidays and Santa Claus" - what else comes to mind if not CHRISTMAS.

It is that time of the year when the Christian families get together to celebrate and honour the birth of Jesus Christ, Son of God. Did you know that December 25th was appointed by the Church Officials in Rome? It was during the reign of emperor Constantine in the 3rd century that it was decided as the birthdate of Jesus. The date itself and several of the customs and traditions everyone has come to associate with Christmas actually evolved from pagan traditions celebrating the Winter Solstice.

Centuries ago, in the beginning, Christmas was celebrated exclusively at public gatherings but in the early years of 19th century, people began to revel and rejoice on their own with family and close friends. Now, Christians celebrate the festival by attending the Midnight Mass, holding Church services, singing carols, decorating their homes, putting up a Christmas Tree with ornaments aplenty, having parties, visiting friends and family and exchanging gifts. Christmas festivity is always a wonderful joyous time that brings everyone together and keeps families connected in a special way.

Christmas Trivia

- Santa has more than 30 different festive names, one of them being Sinterklaas in Dutch.
- Tradition of putting up Christmas trees is more than 500 years old. Germans are credited with starting it.
- The Christmas wreath is a symbol of love and eternal life
- Thomas Edison and his business partner Edward Johnson invented the Christmas lights.
- Tradition of singing carols is based on the English custom of wassailing that means to toast to someone's good health and fortune.
- The yule log calls back to a holiday tradition from the Iron Age.
- Each of the Christmas tree ornaments has a special meaning; example - a bird ornament reflects happiness and joy, an angel ornament asks for God's guidance, a fruit basket is for generosity and plenty to eat and so on and so forth.
- Tradition of hanging stockings on Christmas eve comes from a legend about Saint Nicholas who put gold coins in the stockings of three poor sisters. Children now hang them up hoping to find them filled with gifts in the morning.
- 'Silent Night' is the most recorded Christmas song in History. It has more than 700+ versions.
- Tinsel or the long strings of shiny coloured paper was originally spun from silver; now it is just plastic or filmed paper.
- The largest Christmas present in the world is the 'Statue of Liberty' given by France to the USA in 1886.
- Originally composed as a Thanksgiving tune, 'Jingle Bells' was the first song played in space.

Nirupama. C, C-63

Merry
Christmas



Destination comes
closer



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- 63 National Selections in Games & Sports.
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A Rusty Vignette

Back in the eighteenth century, Soldierpet was a residential colony for the British army. Old Town went on to become home to the Anglo-Indian community in Vizag and, even to this day, resembles the backyards of Great Britain.

And then, when the French missionaries landed on these shores around the middle of the nineteenth century, they too left their indelible mark on the area-schools with a cosmopolitan je ne sais quoi (St Aloysius, St John's, Queen Mary's, etc.) sprang up, along with magnificent churches. (St John's Church was designed by no less a personage than the legendary Sir Arthur Cotton, the civil engineer who designed the Godavari barrage.)

The locale attracted a variety of communities and became a lively mix of Anglo-Indians, French missionaries, Bengali wage workers and fisherfolk, not to forget the fiery, moneylending Kabuliwalas (the Shylocks of One Town).

The neighbourhood still has listed heritage buildings like the Town Hall and the Freemasons' Hall that lend a certain grandeur to the area. In addition, Soldierpet includes the fishing harbour, a bus depot, cinemas, a reading room and various government offices-most of them ramshackle and run down now, their peeling paintwork perennially smothered with the red dust belched by the overhead iron-ore belt, lending a surreal, roseate glow over the whole area.

Every Sunday, like clockwork, we motored through the winding lanes of Old Town to church. This locality is etched into my memory with the magic of fairy lights, the singing of the choirs and the fishy fragrances of the incoming tides.

Our Sundays invariably held a festive air of breathless and joyful anticipation. We were always getting ready for some celebration or other-Easter, Thanksgiving, Annual Fête, Christmas, New Year. The run up to each of these was just as exhilarating and exciting as the very day of the festival.

The Annual Fête

Held in the churchyard of St John's Church, the annual fête held the ambience of a rustic, village market with its food stalls, games kiosks, the resplendent merry-go-rounds and a carnival wheel.

Several weeks in advance, the parishioners would be flung into a flurry of activity, making posters and banners, arranging for a mind-boggling array of delicious food and putting up stalls. The younger lot was herded into the parsonage and set to making strings of bunting to ensure that they-the kids not the bunting-weren't accidentally trampled underfoot.

We've even had music with a live band at times and people could request a song ... for a song (lol!)-like the jukeboxes of yore.

Choir

Being corralled into the choir was an adventure in itself.

Treacherous parents, only too happy to get us out of their hair, colluded with the organist and the padre, and before long, a hapless bunch of us found ourselves doing the interminable and incessant scales:

-LA LA LA-

darkly muttering about the unfairness of it all as we watched the blessed ones, those sly creatures who had managed to evade the choir master's long arm, blithely wave goodbye to those of us who had to stay behind for choir practice.

The bonds built by commiseration among the choristers, not unlike the bonds between the inmates of Guantanamo Bay, have withstood the passage of time.

We were segregated into the four parts of the harmony: soprano, alto, tenor and bass. This 'segregation' was done by mysterious and mystical forces beyond our comprehension, with the soprano in the front row, the bass right at the back and the rest of us heaped willy-nilly in the middle as alto and tenor.

The trick was to maintain a low profile to elude the wrath of the powers-that-were-the choir master and the organist. The aunties and uncles who had also been roped in into the choir were our guardian angels, as it were and, as youngsters, we gratefully slipped beneath the shielding mantle of their powerful and mellifluous voices.

'CRESCENDO!' the choir conductor would bellow, his face like an apoplectic thundercloud. In abject terror we would emit a series of sad squeaks.

Carols

Carol rounds was a week-long nocturnal picnic, rattling about in the old, yellow, parish-school bus in the tortuous alleyways of Vizag, all of which looked incredibly magical and mysterious in the moonlight, starlight and the inadequate streetlights of the not-so-cold winter nights in Vizag.

In the dead of night, we visited the homes of pyjama-clad parishioners who looked so very different from the immaculate folk who congregated for mass on Sundays. Our hosts, notwithstanding their nightclothes, would join in with our joyful rendition of the Christmas carols.

We met with the sleepy dogs, cats, parakeets and other miscellaneous furred, feathered and even scaled (eeugh!) housemates. There were cakes and goodies for the carollers at every home and we gorged ourselves like we were starving slum-dog millionaires.

Dawn would inconsiderately sneak up over the horizon as we toured around the last few homes for the night, nevertheless we sang with undiminished gusto, 'Silent night, Holy night, All is calm . . .'

The following night we set off again in the big bus, its sorely deficient suspension doing its darndest to rearrange our vertebral discs. We would be hoarse hunchbacks of Notre Dame by the end of that week.

And Hallelujah! there we were, warbling for all we were worth, during the yuletide run up to Christmas, ringing in the New Year and exultantly hailing Easter morn, not to mention celebrating all the weddings and baptisms that came in between, having practised all year long. Oh, glorious days!

Covid-19 has put paid to much of this activity, and I do miss the crimson-tinted, iron-ore aura of Soldierpet.

Usha Surampudi, RC-056





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