

## SANATANA DHARMA COLLEGE

## **ALAPPUZHA**

Affiliated to the University of Kerala Reaccredited by NAAC with A+ grade



**CRITERION: 7** 

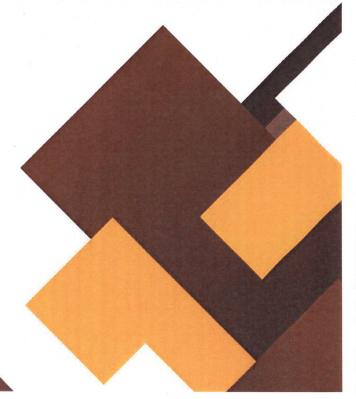
**Institutional Values and Best** 

**Practices** 

7.2

### Sanatanam Surabhi

(Spreading the Fragrance of Indian Knowledge)



#### **DECLARATION**

The best practice, "Sanatanam Surabhi" encompasses the following initiatives of Sanatana Dharma College committed to the cause of accumulating, preserving and disseminating traditional Indian Knowledge and Local Knowledge pertaining to the region of Alappuzha.



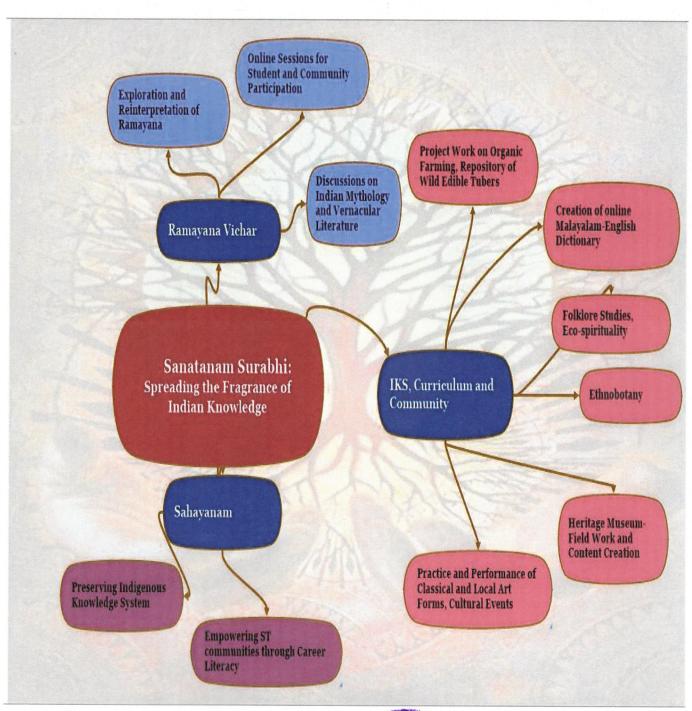
Principal
Prof. (Dr.) PREMA K.H
PRINCIPAL
PEN 457693
S D COLLEGE ALAPPUZHA

## Sanatanam Surabhi: Spreading the Fragrance of Indian Knowledge

India's traditional knowledge systems are vital for preserving the wisdom of several millennia and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Adoption of these systems will mould our youngsters into a community of stronger, smarter, and committed individuals. Integrating IKS (Indian Knowledge Systems) into modern education ensures the preservation (and simultaneous reinterpretation) of original Indian perspectives pertaining to language, art, ecology, culture, literature and the sciences. "Sanatanam Surabhi", one of the best practices of Sanatana Dharma College, exemplifies this integration of the traditional and the modern. The Sanskrit term "Surabhi" signifies fragrance, eternal beauty and the mythical 'Kamadhenu', the 'cow of plenty'. In this context, Surabhi stands for the fragrance, beauty and eternal value of Indian Knowledge Systems. Indian knowledge is the source of contentment and eternal happiness; and is the epitome of healthy living. Sanatanam Surabhi exemplifies these values, as highlighted in the following initiatives.









### 1. Ramayana Vichar – Epics, Mythology and Classical Texts

Sanatana Dharma College, Alappuzha developed an online programme "Ramayana Vichar: A Textual Exploration with Interpretive Insights" to bridge the gap between academic and community knowledge about Indian culture and literature. The programme focusses on **Ramayana**, the foundational epic in Indian literature, and explores its cultural and literary significance through interactive online sessions. It includes introductory sessions, readings with analysis by faculty or guest speakers, and open discussions for participants to share their perspectives and interpretations.

This collaborative programme meant for students as well as the public, uses online platforms to overcome geographical limitations. It has seen significant success with high public participation. The programme has sparked renewed **interest in classical texts** and even led to student achievements in the realm. Ms. Vaishnavi from B. Com won the competition of Gita Chakravyooh conducted by Golokam Trust, Guruvayur on the occasion of Gita Jayanthi and received a cash prize of Rupees One Lakh. She also won another first prize for Ramayanam Quiz conducted by the Department of Malayalam of Sanatana Dharma College. Ms. Priyanka from MA Malayalam won a Ramayana recitation competition conducted by State Library Council and was awarded with Rs.25000 as cash award.











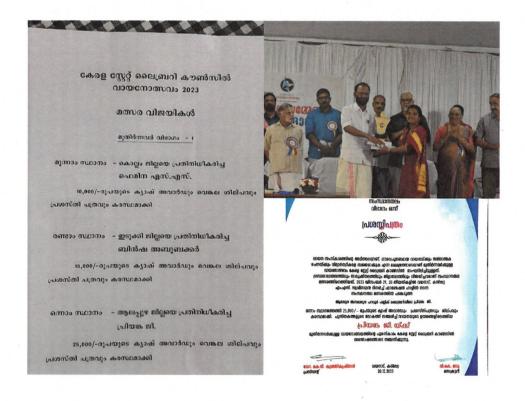


















By promoting an understanding of Indian culture and literary heritage, the programme promotes the application of Indian values in everyday life. This integration of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in student centric and extension activities not only enhances cultural awareness but also supports the **preservation and promotion of India's rich literary traditions**. The programme testifies to the commitment of the institution towards promoting cultural heritage and dialogues between communities. It explores the potential of online platforms and interactive formats in enhancing cultural awareness, critical thinking, and community engagement.



# 2. Sahayanam – Preserving the Knowledge of Indigenous Populations

Indigenous populations (included in the Schedule of Tribes-ST) possess a wealth of traditional knowledge, particularly in **Ayurveda** and **local medicine**, that remains largely unrecognized and untapped. This wealth of **indigenous knowledge** vested in their hands is invaluable and is at the risk of getting lost in course of time. On the other hand, these communities have historically faced marginalization and social exclusion. This has resulted in low educational attainment and limited career options for their members. There's also a widespread lack of awareness about the benefits of registering with employment exchanges, further limiting job opportunities.

To address these multifaceted issues, a collaborative project named 'Sahayanam' has been launched. This initiative involves the NSS Unit, Sanatana Dharma College, Alappuzha; Community Development Department, Cochin Shipyard Limited; and Kerala State Scheduled Caste Development Department. 'Sahayanam' implements a multi-pronged approach to empower ST communities and to harness their immense wealth of local knowledge.

The project begins with a comprehensive survey. This survey identifies and documents the socio-economic, educational, and employment registration status of all ST families in the district. It also collects information on traditional knowledge in Ayurveda and local medicine with the aim of integrating it into the Indian Knowledge Systems.

Sahayanam then focuses on targeted awareness campaigns. These campaigns educate the community about diverse career options, the importance of employment registration, and the value of traditional knowledge.



Workshops, community outreach programs, and local media are used to dispel misconceptions and create a sense of inclusion. Recognizing the importance of individual strengths and interests, 'Sahayanam' incorporates **psychometric testing**. This testing assesses students' personalities, aptitudes, and interests to provide them with personalized career guidance. Based on the results of the survey, psychometric tests, and their own aspirations, students receive individual support. This support can include guidance on skill development opportunities, educational pathways, and assistance in employment registration.

Crucially, 'Sahayanam' understands the importance of local collaboration. The project partners with local businesses, government agencies, and educational institutions. These partnerships facilitate career placement, training opportunities and support for navigating registration processes. Additionally, the project works to promote the integration of traditional knowledge into mainstream healthcare practices.

#### **Evidence of Success**

'Sahayanam' is an ongoing initiative that has led to greater appreciation and integration of traditional knowledge in Ayurveda and local medicine. This recognition enriches the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) and preserves cultural heritage. The project has also shown measurable progress towards achieving complete ST career literacy in the Alappuzha district. There's been a high level of engagement in awareness campaigns, workshops, and personalized guidance sessions. This has led to a notable increase in the number of ST individuals enrolling in educational programmes, accessing skill development opportunities, and achieving job placements. By equipping these communities with career awareness, educational resources, and recognition of their traditional knowledge, 'Sahayanam' serves as a valuable model for similar initiatives promoting holistic development and cultural preservation.







## 3. Cultural Events – Promoting Traditional Performing Arts and Folklore Studies

Student engagement in classical and local art forms such as 'Vanchippattu', 'Nadanpattu', 'Ottanthullal' and 'Kathakali' highlights India's rich artistic diversity and underscores the importance of traditional knowledge. These activities serve as platforms for showcasing cultural expressions deeply embedded in Indian Knowledge Systems. Besides, students conduct research studies on forms of folk performances and martial arts like 'Padayani', 'Pulikali', and 'Kalaripayattu'. They are explored not only as performances but also as reflections of indigenous rituals, and ecological wisdom.



By participating in art forms and conducting project work on folklore, students gain a holistic understanding of cultural heritage, integrating art, nature, and spirituality into their learning experiences. These initiatives not only enrich student education but also promote cultural appreciation and community cohesion through shared artistic expressions.











PUZIV

The project work done by students on folklore and traditional art forms shed light on Kerala's unique cultural heritage and traditions, highlighting the integral role these art forms play in preserving and transmitting knowledge across generations. The student projects are an exploration of Kerala's rich cultural heritage. They examine the traditional art forms and practices such as "Kalarippayattu, Mohiniyattam, Kathakali, and Ottanthullal", highlighting their historical, artistic, and social significance. By examining these indigenous traditions, the projects reveal the integrative nature of Indian knowledge, where martial arts, dance, drama, and folklore serve as powerful mediums for cultural expression and preservation.

These academic efforts go beyond simple documentation, offering critical analyses and interpretations that connect ancient practices with modern society. This work underscores the importance of sustaining and revitalizing India's cultural heritage, reflecting the holistic and interdisciplinary essence of the Indian Knowledge System. These works include a vast body of knowledge traditions passed down through generations in India, including art forms, medicine, agriculture, and astronomy. By exploring the origins, practices, and social relevance of Kerala's art forms, these projects contribute to the preservation of this valuable knowledge system. They demonstrate how these art forms embody not just entertainment but also social commentary, cultural history, and traditional healing practices, making them a vital part of Kerala's unique cultural identity.







e sand (Albast stor reference). A section of the Organ is banked of Arbast at the Organ is banked of Arbast as Eighbourd to removable English, ORCS system

Karalam Asrayana Panickeri A Trailbhaceu of the Malayatum Mage

procures should also beauty of Nova a pion follower of the representation of process of the Royal of Restrict (Annihilation in Professionage and Anniha 1999; 1999).

From Code: 221590". Cambidate Codes

MORINIVALITAM: THE BANCE OF THE ENCHANTRESS

Pears Code: 12319805 Cumbibles Code: 13419125062

(3319)23933









### 4. Sacred Groves and the Study of Regional Culture

Student centric activities at Sanatana Dharma College are crafted to encompass local knowledge and exploration. Field visits to sacred groves such as 'Vandanam Kavu' provide students with hands-on learning experiences in studying indigenous plants and cultural practices. These groves, revered for their spiritual and ecological significance, serve as living laboratories for botanical surveys and cultural studies. Through fieldwork, students explore the intricate relationships between traditional knowledge, biodiversity and cultural practices rooted in sacred grove traditions. These experiences promote community-based learning and indigenous knowledge, empowering students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical life.





#### 5. Traditional Food Culture - Repository of Wild edible Tubers

Our college houses a unique and valuable resource – a wild edible tuber repository. This collection safeguards a variety of native and possibly even undiscovered tuberous plants that were traditionally consumed as food sources. The repository serves multiple purposes. It functions as a bank of genetic material, ensuring the preservation of these potentially forgotten or endangered food sources. It also explores research opportunities, allowing scientists and botanists to study the nutritional content, cultivation possibilities, and potential medicinal properties of these tubers. Furthermore,





the repository can serve as an educational tool, raising awareness about the forgotten systems of indigenous knowledge.



### 6. Preserving the Knowledge of Ulladan Tribal Group

Dr. Bindu P K, Assistant Professor of Botany at S D College, leads research in ethnobotany, documenting the botanical knowledge of Kerala's Ulladan tribal group. Her research focuses on the traditional uses of local plants in medicines and rituals, emphasizing the urgent need to preserve endangered knowledge amidst urbanization and cultural shifts. Dr. Bindu's work contributes to botanical science and towards cultural heritage preservation. By documenting and protecting these practices, her research ensures the



continuity of traditional wisdom and its integration into modern scientific understanding.



### 7. Promoting Holistic Well-Being - Yoga

The NSS and NCC units actively promote yoga among students, emphasizing its role in cultivating physical and mental well-being. Events like the International Yoga Day session, led by experts like Sri. Arun Chandran and Sri. Toms Antony, highlight the benefits of Yoga in achieving holistic health. Through structured health and Yoga classes, students learn to cultivate a balanced lifestyle, integrating Yoga principles into their daily routines for enhanced physical and mental resilience. These initiatives contribute to the overall wellbeing of students, promoting a culture of mindfulness and holistic education within educational institutions.













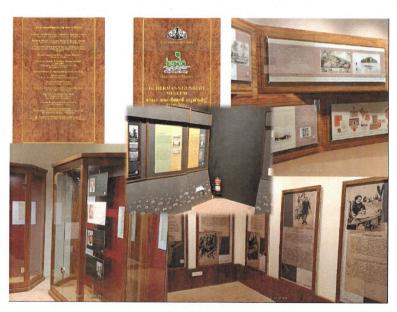




## 8. Preserving Culture through Repositories - Heritage Museum Fieldwork and Content Creation

Dr. Jose Mathew, Assistant Professor of the Department of Botany, has played a key role in content creation and narrative development of museums like the Dr. Herman Gundert Museum (Thalassery) and the Wayanad Tribal Heritage Museum. These works not only enhance cultural awareness but also preserved the various aspects of Kerala's heritage.

- Dr. Herman Gundert Museum: This museum houses a vast collection related to language heritage, including Dr. Gundert's dictionary, considered the first Malayalam "Nighandu."
- Wayanad Tribal Heritage Museum: This museum explores the rich tapestry of tribal life in Wayanad, showcasing traditional Ayurvedic systems, and the history of the region. Dr. Jose Mathew (Department of Botany) has played a key role in content creation and narrative development for this museum.



Dr Herman Gundert Museum, Thalassery



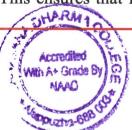
## SANATANA DHARMA COLLEGE



### Wayanad Tribal Heritage Museum

### 9. Preservation of Language and Cultural Relevance

Smt.Neetha Prasad, Assistant Professor, Department of English, participated in the Malayalam – English Dictionary Editing Workshop, which was aimed at developing the first official Online Dictionary of Traditional Malayalam terms. The Online Malayalam-English Dictionary integrates words from diverse sources like Ayurvedic texts, mythology, legends, folklore and performing arts. This initiative is pivotal not only in safeguarding linguistic diversity but also in enhancing cultural knowledge. By incorporating terms from traditional medical practices and indigenous records, the dictionary serves as a comprehensive resource, bridging modern language users with the deep historical roots of Malayalam. This ensures that future generations have access





to the nuanced language and cultural heritage of Kerala, contributing significantly to academic resources and cultural preservation efforts.



#### Conclusion

Sanatanam Surabhi encourages cultural preservation and holistic well-being by integrating traditional knowledge with modern practices. Through diverse projects in literary studies, language preservation, art, heritage conservation and community empowerment, the college ensures that India's rich heritage and indigenous knowledge are cherished and sustained for future generations.

