

Kannada in cyberspace

SIMON VARGHESE

NAMASKARA, Kannada mokkelige swagoltha. Here we are with what many wanted for a very long time. Far away from home and amidst a new crowd and culture, there are very few who have not thought, longingly, about their good old home. However much one would have struggled back home, the love and the attachment that one has for one's own home and language defies description.

Having interacted with many NRIs, especially Kannadigas, two enterprising young men from Bangalore have latched upon a novel idea -- a homepage in Kannada on Internet. The ever expanding possibilities of cyber world was handy tool to put their plan into action. "Vast opportunities opened up with the coming in of the Internet to India,

Having interacted with many NRIs, especially Kannadigas, two young men from Bangalore hit upon a novel idea -- a homepage in Kannada on Internet.

downloaded by 6.30 p.m., for people to catch up with the latest in the Kannada literary and cultural world.

Another major feature of this homepage is the information given to the people about a cultural events or artistes going on tour abroad. "People get the latest on in the cultural front just by surfing," adds Muralidhar.

The recently concluded Vijayotsava at Hampi organised by the Prassidha foundation was the most latest cultural event to go on the Internet. The response to that had been quite thrilling for the team at Padaki inett value. During their visit to Hampi, the duo also met the Vice Chancellor of Kannada University, Dr Kambar, who offered his support in promoting thier unique venture. Now the Kannada University has its own homepage listing the various activities of the University and the different courses it offers. A letter from the Vice Chancellor tells the parents more about the university thereby enabling their children to learn Kannada and Karnataka's culture.

This web site also offers a homepage for artists and writers free of cost. This would certainly go a long way in propagating the rich traditions and culture of the State. "The response itself is a great encouragement for us as we are in our initial stages," says Reshmi who is the ace on computers in the team. Events related to Kannada and culture from anywhere in the State is welcome at the site. They reassert the fact that they do not want it to be an "only Bangalore" affair.

The team is also planning to start Kannada classes so that people would be able to learn Kannada from any part of the world. They also launched a homepage to coincide with the fortieth anniversary celebrations of MES college. "This was a mark of our respect and regard towards our alma mater, as we have a emotional attachment to our college. We got good response to it," adds Deepak.

More details of this homepage with the motto *Say it with pride, its my Bangalore* can be had from telephone fax 3310036 or 3310669.



The 'mybangalore' team which launched Kannada on Internet.

Photo by the author

so we decided to go for it. And so keeping in mind the Kannadigas scattered around the world, we decided to do it in Kannada," says Muralidhar Palski. Their website <http://www.mybangalore.com> had a very modest beginning.

"Many expressed their desire to have a homepage which would offer them the latest news and developments in the fields of art and literature. We did notice that on Internet various newspapers offered more news of political developments. So our emphasis is mainly on arts and literature," says Deepak Mavinkurve, partner in this novel venture.

The homepage which was launched in December has received good response from different parts of the world. But the maximum visits to their

homepage is from the US with a vast number of Kannadigas working in the software industry and the field of space research. Muralidhar cites an interesting episode when one of the surfers had asked for the address of eminent writer Byrappa and another surfer helped him with the address!

The two partners and their team read all the daily newspaper and select stories with an emphasis on culture and arts. An expert in Kannada translation immediately goes about the task of finding the right words and does a neat job on the tough words. Once that work is over, the copies are