AGASTHYAM LEAF

Agasthyam: IKS Centre for Kalaripayattu
September Edition



At Agasthyam, every milestone is a step towards keeping an extraordinary legacy alive. This September brought moments of national recognition, the revival of ancient martial traditions, new journeys in training, and meaningful conversations that carried our heritage beyond the Kalari. From honouring the wisdom of the past to inspiring the warriors of tomorrow, here's a look at the moments that made this month memorable.

Honoured with the Guru Dronacharya Iconic Excellency Master Award

On 26 September, Gurukkal Dr. S. Mahesh received the Guru Dronacharya Iconic Excellency Master Award at the Grand Dronacharya & GDIMA Awards India 2026, held at Muktadhara Auditorium, New Delhi.

He was one of 35 masters from across India honoured for lifelong contribution to traditional martial arts and for preserving the Guru–Shishya tradition. The award recognises his work in protecting Kalarippayattu's traditional training system while bringing it to new generations.

The Guru Dronacharya International Martial Art Confederation (DIMAC) organised the awards. They honoured masters across many disciplines, including:

- Kalarippayattu, Silambam, Mallakhamb and Thang-Ta
- Wushu, Kung Fu, Karate, Judo and Taekwondo
- Kabaddi, Kho Kho and Yoga
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The event's theme was *"Honoring Masters, Preserving Traditions, Empowering Futures"* and its motto was *"Kalarippayattu - The Soul of Our Heritage."*



Dhanurvidya Returns This Navarathri

Agasthyam is reviving Dhanurvidya, India's ancient science of archery and martial discipline, with a 14-day residential programme during Navarathri.

The *Agasthyam Dhanurvidya Programme* will combine:

- hands-on training in archery
- the cultural and spiritual dimensions of the tradition

The programme aims to reconnect a younger generation with a heritage that has been dormant for too long. It will be taught through structured training during one of the most auspicious periods of the year.



Know More

Second CRPF Batch Completes Kalarippayattu Teacher Training

A second batch of Central Reserve Police Force personnel has completed the Kalarippayattu Teacher Training Course at Agasthyam, under the guidance of Gurukkal Dr. S. Mahesh.

The training went beyond technique to cover discipline, mental resilience, character and the values of India's living martial tradition. These trainees will now carry Kalarippayattu's knowledge and methods into the force, which builds physical readiness and also a spirit of service.

Train the body. Strengthen the mind. Build character.



Kalabhairava Linga Consecrated in the Agasthya Cave, Kalippara

On the full moon of Friday, 26 September, at 4 PM, Gurukkal Dr. S. Mahesh led the Prana Pratishta of the Kalabhairava Linga at Kalippara, near Kattakkada.

The Linga was installed in the ancient cave on the path to the Lokambika Temple. Tradition holds that Sage Agasthya meditated in this cave before setting out for Agasthyarkoodam, which rises directly opposite. The installation was carried out in accordance with the wishes of the Kalippara Temple Committee.

About the site:

- Kalippara sits nearly 3,000 feet up in the Western Ghats, minutes from Neyyar Dam.
- The hilltop shrine of Goddess Lokambika is believed to have been consecrated by Sage Agasthya himself on his journey south.
- An ancient pond beside the shrine is held to be the site of that original consecration.

Members and students of Agasthyam Kalari observed the ceremony as a collective sadhana. Devotees believe the Kalabhairava presence, facing the sacred Agasthya Hills, will deepen Kalippara's power as a centre of worship and inner practice.



“Flex Your Future”: Gurukkal at the SSVM Transforming India Conclave

Gurukkal Dr. S. Mahesh spoke at the fifth SSVM Transforming India Conclave 2026 in Coimbatore. He argued that Kalarippayattu can give young people the resilience, discipline and mental strength a changing world demands.

The art goes far beyond physical training, he said. It builds:

- self-discipline and concentration
- body awareness
- the ability to meet challenges with calm

At a time of rapid social and technological change, he called for introducing the young to Indian Knowledge Systems as a source of adaptability and inner strength.

The conclave ran from 31 August to 2 September. It explored resilience, wellbeing, nutrition, movement and discipline, with speakers including:

- Air Commodore and astronaut Prashanth Balakrishnan Nair
- Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra
- CSK captain Ruturaj Gaikwad
- Bharatanatyam dancer Rukmini Vijayakumar
- gastroenterologist Dr. Pal Manickam
- wellness entrepreneur Sarvesh Shashi

Manimekalai Mohan, Founder and Managing Trustee of SSVM Institutions, said education must prepare children not just for exams and careers, but for setbacks, change and their own wellbeing.



Running for Wellness: Gurukkal at the Kovalam Marathon

Gurukkal Dr. S. Mahesh joined around 3,000 runners at the Kovalam Marathon, an event promoting fitness and active living. Runners spanned all ages and backgrounds, from sports enthusiasts to public figures.

His presence highlighted Kalarippayattu's place in holistic wellbeing: strength, discipline, focus and a healthy way of life. Through Agasthyam Kalari, he continues to champion that idea every day.



The Warrior Spirit of Bharath: Gurukkal at the University of Kerala

The UGC–MMTTC, University of Kerala, invited Gurukkal S. Mahesh as Resource Person for its Refresher Course on Indian Knowledge Systems, with special reference to Manuscriptology.

His session, *"The Warrior Spirit of Bharath,"* explored the courage, resilience, discipline and responsibility at the heart of India's martial heritage. It was followed by an *Introduction to Kalarippayattu* workshop, where participants experienced the art first-hand. The session showed how traditional knowledge systems remain a living key to India's cultural identity.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS
Upcoming events:

Navaratri (September/October)
9 Days of Shakti
Daily events, Devi worship, Mega Admission Festival
Vijayadashami, Vidyarambham - Best day for new admissions and initiation into Kalari

Deepavali (October/November)
Light the Warrior Within
New batches, festive offers

Annual Warrior Festival (December)
Student grading, demonstrations, awards, alumni gathering



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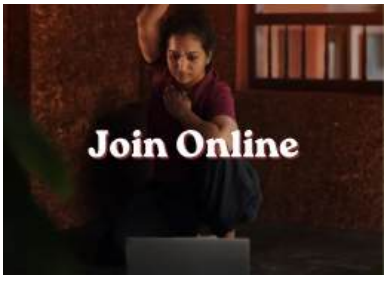
For instructors looking to carry the tradition forward.



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