

Thai Manne Vanakkam

Aum Sri Sairam. Our most humble pranaams at the lotus feet of our beloved Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Our Swami says that it is only by honoring one's mother and motherland can man get peace and happiness. To depict this we the Balavikas students of Chennai Metro North are presenting a skit named Thai Manne Vanakkam.

We begin with depicting a new reality show on a popular TV Channel "Planet TV". Vijay is the anchor of this program which is aimed at promoting nationalism among young citizens of India. This reality show invites groups of students from schools to stage a program based upon the theme of the show.

The scene opens with the start of the TV show.

Reality Show Scene

Vijay: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I am Vijay and I welcome you to India's first reality show on Indian nationalism Thai Manne Vanakkam sponsored by Saturn Skyscrapers, India's tallest buildings!

In this show we depict our love for the country through dance/music/skits by school children. There are no restrictions on what program they can enact as long as it is based on our theme. The winners are selected by you and you alone – Makkal Teerpe Mahesan teerpu

Put your hands together to welcome the first group == "Swinging Symphony".

(applause) This group is from Symphony School in Bangalore. What have you got for us today?

Participant: "We have a unique dance on a medley showing love for our country".

Vijay: Oh that's wonderful! Are you ready? Let's Swing to the symphony....

[Big round of applause to greet the troupe]

--- Medley --- dance show ----

[Applause]

Vijay: Wow! What a brilliant performance by Swinging Symphony! They have set the stage on fire! If you like this performance – you must get out your mobiles and vote for them! Let's hear their vote appeal!

Participant: "We have worked very hard for this dance and hope we have done well. If you like our performance, please vote for us. Using your mobile Type SS and send it to 12345. I repeat SS is the code for Swinging Symphony. Thank you!"

Vijay: After this fantastic dance show, let us invite on stage our next participants from Melody School of Madurai. Please put your hands together to welcome – “Melodious Musicians”! (applause) So what are you performing today?

Participant: “We have an inspiring song composed by Bharathiar showing the glory of our country”.

Vijay: Oh that’s wonderful! Are you ready? Let’s sway to the melody

[Big round of applause to greet the troupe]

--- Song show ----

[Applause]

Vijay: Wow! What a brilliant performance by Melodious Musicians! They have created a magical mood! Can you all feel it?

[Audience: “YES”]

Vijay: Now – Now, let’s hear their vote appeal!

Participant: “If you like our performance, please vote for us. Using your mobile Type MM and send it to 12345. I repeat - MM is the code for Melodious Musicians. Thank you!”

Vijay: After this mind-blowing performance let us invite on stage our next participants from STARS! They are not aliens my dear friends ... they are from Sai Transformation and Realization School from Kerala. Please put your hands together to welcome these Super Stars! (applause) So what have you got for us today?

Participant: “We have a humble offering to this august audience in the form of a small drama, based upon a true story. Also, we have a request to make to you and the entire audience.”

Vijay: Oh is that so? And what is the request?

Participant: “That we will tell you after our performance is completed.”

Vijay: Umm... Suspense uh! So let’s not delay even a minute now. All the best, Super Stars and go ahead and start your program!

Scene I: (50 years ago in a small village in Kerala, India)

Kannamma: Oh! What shall I do? You must advise me, sir. As the village Panchayat head, only you can help me.

Village Panchayat Head: Tell me Kannamma. What can I do for you?

Kannamma: You know my husband died recently and has left me with the responsibility of bringing up my 5 year old son. Not only that, on his death bed, he took a promise from me to educate our son. Now, how can I do that? There are no schools in our village and I cannot afford to go to town.

VP Head: Umm. This is a problem. Let me see.... You know the village of Thanpuram? It is a few kilometers away from our village. That village has a school. Why don't you go and meet the master of that school and ask for help? I heard he is a nice man and also he was looking for a lady to help him clean and take care of the school premises.

Kannamma: Oh? That sounds promising. But how will I go there? Where will I stay there? I do not have any money.

VP Head: Going there should not be a problem. I will ask my man to drop you in my bullock cart. As regards you staying there, my aunt who lives in that village may be able to help you. Why don't you pray to God, go there and see?

Kannamma: Thank you very much sir. You are really very kind. May God bless you with lots of health, wealth and happiness!

Scene II: (12 years later)

Kannamma: My son, now you have completed your 12thStd with first rank in the district! This is great news! Your father will be so proud of you! Please remember to thank your kind school master who helped you study in this school without any fees – just because I was helping in cleaning the school.

Manohar: Yes Amma! I am so happy! I already thanked him and fell at his feet. He was very happy and gave me some sweets. He also had another great piece of news for me that has made me doubly happy.

Kannamma: Is that so? What is it?

Manohar: I have won the Exchange Student Scholarship from our district. With this scholarship, I can go and do my higher studies free of cost in the most reputed college in America. Isn't that great?

Kannamma: May God bless us all. He is very kind.

Manohar: Yes. This will be my first trip outside our district. Isn't that exciting? My whole class is envious of me. I am going to America... I am going to America... Yahoo!

Scene III (15 years later):

(An older Manohar stylishly dressed comes to meet his mother from America)

Manohar: Hi Mom! You have not changed at all. Why it looks like you are wearing the same dress that you were wearing 15 years ago?

Kannamma: Welcome Son. Ah – but you have changed a lot.

Manohar: Of course. Do you know how I live in Boston? Like a king! I have a big house like a mansion. I have 2 cars and run a booming import-export business dealing in Kerala spices. Life is so comfortable there. That's why I have been writing to you all these years to join me there – but you never came.

Kannamma: No my son. My place is in this village.

Manohar: Why? What's there in this dirty village that you do not want to leave?

Kannamma: Manohar, now that you are educated, you find this dirty? Many years ago, when we first came here, a strange lady gave us shelter in her house and treated us as her own family. A school master was kind enough to teach you free of cost. With this wealth of education, you have now made your life comfortable. Should I now think only of myself? No – I must think of making the lives of other such boys comfortable.

Manohar: What? How are you doing that?

Kannamma: I still work in that same school, and that school master continues to be kind. Another boy is now learning free of cost because of this. How can I leave him?

Manohar: Oh – that's all uh? Why, I will pay that boy's fees for his entire school life. Then you can come; can you not?

Kannamma: No my son. There are hundreds of boys like him. If you pay the fees of one, I will look to educate one more. We have to eradicate illiteracy from our district, state and nation. That is the smallest thing I can do with my life, for my mother land. Now it is getting late for me. I have to go to school. Bye.

Manohar (to himself): Oh! What a noble mother I have! And here I was behaving so selfishly. Truly, mother and motherland are the foremost in our lives. I should follow my mother's footsteps.

Scene IV: (present day)

Manohar: Ah! Now the Sai Transformation and Realization School is running in all the villages in our district so well. Our students are getting ranks in State and National level. If my mother Kannamma was alive she would be so happy!

School Teacher: Yes Sir. With your generosity, we have been able to establish 10 branches of this school so far and all are running well.

Manohar: Yes. My mother was a great believer in Sai form of education which stresses on character over mere knowledge. With Sai's blessings, we have been able to replicate those in these schools.

School Teacher: Yes Sir. STAR School is indeed filled with stars – students who by their behavior light the way for society. It is indeed because of this that our district has the highest rate of literacy in the country. (punch music)

Manohar: Yes. My mother has taught me so many things – but the most important lesson I learnt from her is “Janani Janmboomischa swargadhapi gariyesi”!

(small music piece)

[Thundering Applause]

Vijay: Wow! What a brilliant story – it is truly inspiring. Is it really based upon a true story?

Participant: Yes Sir. This is the story of how the STAR school was born and Manohar is the founding chairman of our school. He has sold his flourishing business in USA and invested his entire wealth and time in building this school.

Vijay: Is it? This is truly noble. Such people are indeed rare. By the way, I have not forgotten about your special request. The suspense is killing me. What is the request you wanted to make?

Participant: This request is on behalf of all of us from STAR School. We did not come to this reality show to win a prize, but to spread awareness of the importance of working for our mother land. As you said earlier, people like our school founder Manohar are very rare. We need many more thousands like him to make our country a true heaven.

Participant: Yes. No country is perfect. It is the duty of every citizen of our country to work to make it perfect.

Participant: Brothers and sisters, please do not send SMS vote for us. Instead, if you like our performance and truly inspired by the story of Kannamma and her son, our humble request is that you do any one act for your country's sake.

Participant: Any action which results in benefit for the country can be done – whether it is for our village, locality, school, environment, society or anything. Let us just think once for the sake of the nation and not just about ourselves. That is our request. Thank you and good bye.

Vijay: Let's hear a big round of applause for these STARS. However the winner of this program will be chosen among other participants by voting only. We have now come to the end today's show. Please do not forget to vote for your favorite team. Good Night and Vanakkam!

News Report Scene:

Gautam (a Newscaster on Planet TV): Good Morning India! I am Gautam and I welcome to today's edition of State of the Nation on Planet TV.

In today's bulletin, we bring you the aftermath of Planet TV's unique reality show Thai Manne Vanakkam that was aired 3 months ago. The show was won by the Melody school from Madurai, but it is another team that has taken the nation by storm. To understand what has happened, let's go over to Mukesh in Kolkata. Mukesh, what have you got for us?

Mukesh: Thanks Gautham. This is a true miracle that we are witnessing in Kolkata. After watching the show, people from all walks of life were completely inspired by the performance put up by STAR School and the story of Kannamma and her son. Their appeal at the end has also moved people and started the revolution of 2016. People have come out in droves to clean the streets of Kolkata. What used to be called as the dirtiest city in the country is now sparkling clean. As you see here, every neighborhood has its own cleanliness police and they enforce the discipline of keeping the roads and streets free of garbage. I have never seen Kolkata streets like this in my life before. Back to you Gautam.

Gautam: Wow! Mukesh – this is truly a revolution. Let's go over to Anil in Mumbai. Anil – what have you got for us?

Anil: Thanks Gautham. The STARS have had a tremendous impact in Mumbai as well. The moneyed businessmen of Mumbai have donated crores of rupees for the re-building of the slums of Dharavi. Where there used to be slums, there stand apartment buildings in concrete which house the slum dwellers. Thousands of people now have a pukka roof over their heads and many more are under construction. Back to you Gautam.

Gautam: This is miraculous indeed! Let us now go over to Vijay in Chennai. Vijay is joined by the entire set of Thai Manne Vanakkam. Vijay, what have you got for us?

Vijay: Gautam, this is truly remarkable. Even when I was hosting the reality show, I knew that the STARS were truly special, but the impact has been way beyond my wildest imagination. People in Chennai have come out in droves to transform the city into a "green metro". Thousands of trees have been planted. Parks have been renovated and spruced up. Garbage is segregated into recyclable and non-recyclable material in every building in the metro. Plastic bags have been banned. It is really a huge change in the behavior of the people of Chennai.

Gautam: That is great! And what do your participants feel?

Vijay: They all are very happy and feel truly proud. What do you all say?

Participants: This indeed is the true prize for the show. Lets all join together to serve our nation. "Vande Mataram" Vande Mataram Vande Mataram

Jai Sairam