

Thank you, THE WEEK, for providing me a space

THE WEEK's illustrious history and mission to tackle issues resonate with me deeply

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As I pen the final column for THE WEEK, I find myself reflecting on the topics I've explored over the past two years, as well as the publication that gave them a home—THE WEEK, which has played a significant role in shaping public discourse in India. Founded in 1982, THE WEEK has carved out a unique space in the Indian media landscape, emerging as one of the largest circulated English news magazines in the country. With its insightful coverage across politics, technology, culture, and social issues, it has become a critical platform that addresses matters pertinent to the lives of India's citizens.

As India's G20 sherpa, I have had the opportunity to address a diverse range of governance and policy challenges on this platform. From exploring the potential of India's blue economy to analysing the implications of sustainable urbanisation, I have tried to make my articles informative and transformative, especially as we find ourselves in a period marked by India's unprecedented regional and global growth. At such a pivotal juncture in history, THE WEEK has allowed me to connect with readers at a time when inclusive dialogue around these pressing issues is most essential.

THE WEEK's illustrious history and its mission to tackle issues that affect the masses resonate with me deeply—reflecting in many ways my own journey and values, which were significantly shaped during my time in Kerala. Having spent a large portion of my life in the Malabar region, I have seen the broad, and deep, impact of community-first values and a commitment to sustainable development first-hand.

In the early 1980s, after completing my MA, I embarked on a journey that would lead me to the heart of Kerala. Although being assigned to the Kerala cadre through the UPSC examination was unexpected and not my initial choice, it turned out to be among the most enlightening phases of my life. My initial days in Thrissur were a cultural revelation, but they also laid the foundation for my understanding of collective action and communication.

Living among the people of Kerala, within its diverse and dynamic communities, I learned the power of community and transformation. This experience has informed my approach to policy and governance



throughout my career. Learning Malayalam was a key part of my integration into the community, and *Malayala Manorama* played a crucial role in that journey. Each morning, I would start my day with the newspaper, using it to improve my language skills and truly understand the pulse of the region. Through its pages, I was introduced to the vibrant stories of Kerala's people—their festivals, their challenges, and their triumphs. This daily ritual helped me grasp the concerns and hopes of the community, keeping me informed and connected, and plugging me into an ecosystem of belonging unlike anything I had experienced before.

My advocacy for women's empowerment, the importance of reducing dependency on fossil fuels, and the need for climate-resilient urban planning all stem from a belief that true progress is collective in nature. Every article in THE WEEK served as an opportunity to elevate these themes, showcasing the interplay between policy and the lived realities of our people.

Using THE WEEK as a platform allowed me to narrate stories of innovation and resilience that often go unnoticed—the fisherman who embraced a new technology to better his catch, the small-scale entrepreneur harnessing digital tools to grow her business, and the communities coming together to celebrate their rich heritage while adapting to modern challenges.

As I conclude this column, I remain optimistic of the future. THE WEEK has helped me share insights and reflect the aspirations and concerns of our citizens. I've been grateful for the positive feedback from loyal middle-class readers, who help distinguish THE WEEK as a platform for meaningful conversation. This connection serves as a reminder of journalism's power to inspire change.

Embracing community-first values, we must continue engaging with local narratives to shape our collective future.

Thank you, THE WEEK, for providing a space to engage, reflect, and advocate for values that uplift and empower every Indian.

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