

IF

What will happen If things can go wrong? Have you ever been waiting for results? You may react like which one of the two people in this story. It is based on true incidents. Anyway the result will come, but there may be a small satisfaction for few people, in knowing it quickly. Kannalan called his son Villalan thrice... once at 9 AM, again at 10 AM. Now it is at 11 AM. It was 2002. He received the same reply..."**Appa, It has not yet come as of now**".

Now it is 2014, let us see another incident. That bird was hurt in the car? Villalan wanted to know the results too. This happened in 2014. He was also anxious, He called Danamma to know whether the life was safe. The bird is called 'Chemboothu' in his village. Later Villalan referred the book, '**The Pocket Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent**' by Richard Grimmett, Carol Inskipp, Tim Inskipp, Published by Oxford Publications in 1999. The bird was identified as *Centropus sinensis*, common name: Greater Coucal, using the book.

Books are a passion for Kannalan. He introduced Shakespeare and Rudyard Kipling to his children. His third child Villalan is a bit unique. He has attended UPSC civil services interview in New Delhi in 2002. Villalan always wanted to test his limits. He liked the sentences starting with if... he dreamed a lot.

It was like a dream. An unknown speeding car has hurt the Coucal. It was a mild hit. The bird limped to the roadside. Villalan crossed it as he saw. No one bothers, for such small birds. But, he wanted his friends to turn back. After one kilometer they returned and attended to the injured bird. Birds are interesting creatures. He likes bird watching. The bird should have watched the car. Coucal is a non parasitic bird, it belongs to Cocco family.

The family was proud. Villalan came back from New Delhi. He may become an IAS officer. Kannalan was exited a lot and has informed many of his relatives and friends. The expectation has increased. Those days internet is not ubiquitous and smart phones are yet to appear. Kannalan was in Chinna Vadambachery village in Coimbatore. He called...

Phone rang in Gnana Prakash Mansion, Veperi , Chennai. Villalan is a veterinarian. Moreover he did poultry science post graduation. He studied in detail about bird keeping. He gave a bit of water to Senbaham. Vets can treat large number of birds in farm, but single Coucal is a strange patient. It is also known as Senbaham. How much Gentamicin how much Oxytetracycline ? Villalan was thinking.

He answered,

“Appa... result did not came”

“ok , wait, when can I call again...?”Kannalan responded.

Ha Ha Ha... No pa... we need to wait for another year... This time result came but my number did not appear in it. That is why I told... Result did not came!

Oh... The phone went dead.

Villalan took the Coucal to the nearby friend home. His friend's mother Dhanalakshmi amma took the bird with all fondness. The bird was kept in the love birds cage. It did not took any water or feed offered. We did not knew what more to do. There is no sufficient muscle for any injection. The bones appeared to be intact.

The next day, Villalan called Danamma to know how was the bird.

His father scolded him.

"I can understand that the results have failed us. But, how come you became so audacious to laugh at that sad message. Your heart is made of steel or something? I cannot be like that."

The results need to be treated like what Rudyard Kipling wrote in the poem **‘IF’ – he says to meet both triumph and disaster as imposters and give them equal treatment.**

The treatment failed. Danamma answered... the bird passed away. Villalan took the message with silence; he did what he could do. Results are fascinating; however they may not meet our expectations.

Villalan did not jump in air when he became IAS in next attempt. He might have seen only one Senbaham but read the poem ‘IF’ several times!