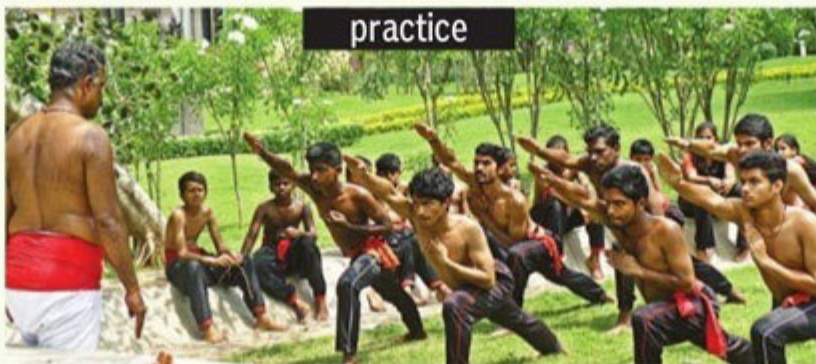




The kalari edge



Amrita University has introduced kalari classes with a veteran from Palakkad at the helm

DO you know that *kalaripayattu* is one of the oldest fighting systems in existence now? Now practised in Kerala and few parts of Tamil Nadu, the martial art saw a dramatic resurgence in its popularity during the 1920s, and has also featured in movies like *Asoka* and *The Last Legion*. Now Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham in Ettimadai has introduced the combat game to its campus, with students to undergo training under C Muralidharan Gurukkal, a Palakkad-based mas-

ter trainer who is a disciple of K Narayanan Nair Gurukkal, a famous name in the sport from the south.

What makes *kalaripayattu* important beyond the battlefield are the numerous health benefits associated with it, making it useful for the common man as well. "Besides increasing concentration capabilities and physical flexibility and strength, it also helps in battling problems like asthma," he says, adding that it is an effective form of self defence too. The traditional dress to be worn by the students will be provided by Muralidharan himself, who will source them from the Kerala Kalaripayattu Association. "Other equipment like swords, shields and *chooral vadis* (five and half feet long) will be provided by the college," he confirms.

Course duration from one to four years. 6pm to 7.30pm, from Tuesdays to Fridays. At ₹500 per month. Details: 2685000

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