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## MYLAPORE TIMES

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January 11 - 17, 2020

16 pages Free Circulation

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## Concert in the Park

A concert in the park - the first formal event of the annual Sundaram Finance MYLAPORE FESTIVAL. And so, the 2020 edition of the Festival began on January 9 with a concert by students of Sruthilaya School. The concert was held in Chess Square at the rear of Nageswara Rao Park in Luz, which has been the venue for concerts for the past 17 years of the Festival. Concerts will be held here every morning, till Sunday, 7 a.m. onwards. Mikes and amplification is not used as a rule.

All info at www.mylaporefestival.com







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## **January 11**

**EVENTS** 

Veda chanting and sai bhajans. By Mylapore samithi of Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, Tamilnadu. At Lady Sivaswami Ayyar Girls School, Mylapore. 5.30 p.m. Ph: 9840085045.

## **January 12**

Talk on 'Kena upanishad' by Swami Shashishikananda. At R. K. Math, Mylapore. 5.30 p.m. Ph: 24621110.

Temple cleaning event at Thiruvalluvar Temple, Mylapore. Organised by Loka Dharma Seva Foundation Trust. 9 a.m. Ph:7305647013.

A humourous session. Organised by Humour Club International Triplicane Chapter. Special programme on 'Carnatic music in cinema' by vocalist Madurai G. S. Mani. All are welcome. At Mylapore Fine Arts Club, 45, Oliver Road, Mylapore. 10 a.m.

Talk on 'Dakshinamurthy stotram' by Swamini Satyavratananda Saraswathi. At Samskrita Barathi Hall, 5, 7th Street, Dr. R. K. Salai, Mylapore. 8.30 a.m. Ph: 24328087.

**MYLAPORE EVENTS ONLINE. DAILY** 

All important local events are now posted online daily.

Pongal festival and Marghazhi kolam competition. Organised by Mandaveli Raja Street Residents Welfare Association. At Raja Street, Mandaveli. 9 a.m. onwards. Ph: 9841033715.

## **January 13**

Guided meditation by Swami Mahamedhananda. At R. K. Math, Mylapore, 5.30 p.m. Ph: 24621110.

'Swami Vivekananda Saptaham', a week long lecture series on Swami Vivekananda by Govindapuram Sri Balaji Bhagavathar. Till Jan. 19. At R. K. Math, Mylapore. 4.45 p.m.

## **January 14**

Kolam competition at The Kalyana Nagar Association. Registration is free. At 29, West Circular Road, Mandavelipakkam. 3 p.m. Ph: 24952997.

Sri Thiagaraja Aradhana Mahotsavam. Organised by Sri

Thiagaraja Sangeetha Vidwath Samajam. Till Jan. 23. At 10, Thiagarajapuram, Mylapore. Ph: 9840064292.

www.mylaporetimes.com

## **January 15**

Talk on 'Srimad Bhagavatam' in Thamizh by Swami Paramasukhananda. At R. K. Math, Mylapore. 5.30 p.m. Ph: 24621110.

173rd Thyagaraja Aradhana Mahotsavam. Pancharathna krithis will be sung by noted vocalists. At 12, Mathala Narayanan Street, Mylapore. Ph: 24613226.

### **January 16**

Talk on 'Naishkarmya siddhi' by Swamini Satyavratananda Saraswathi. At Shri Rangavilasam, Sri Nandalala Temple, 8, Dr. Ranga Road, Mylapore. 11 a.m. Ph: 24328087.

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Mylapore MLA and table tennis coach R. Rajesh hand over a brick for the bhoomi puja for the TT court complex construction

## INDOOR TABLE TENNIS COURT TO BE BUILT IN R. A. PURAM PLAYGROUND

By Our Staff Reporter

The coming together of a few hands has helped to lay the foundation of what could be an exclusive table tennis auditorium and coaching centre in the public space in the Mylapore neighbourhood.

Mylapore MLA, R. Nataraj picked up the basic design and ideas presented by former India TT player and now coach, R. Rajesh and convinced Chennai Corporation to come up with its own plans for the table tennis complex he and Rajesh had in mind.

The civic body did and so, recently, the bhoomi pooja for this sports facility was held late last year at the Chennai Corporation ground (popularly called Alphonsa ground), located off South Canal Bank Road in R. A. Puram, near the Airtel offices.

The complex, an independent one will come up alongside the indoor stadium with badminton courts which stands in the far western corner of the ground.

Spread over 2,000 sq. ft, it will be able to accommodate five table-tennis tables. There will be facilities for players' changing rooms, washrooms and storage. The place will also be flood-lit in course of time.

Rajesh, who currently coaches junior TT players who are among the top ten in India besides running his own private coaching classes says that the complex in R. A. Puram will be used by people who enjoy a game of TT and by junior players who want special coaching to play in the competitive games and represent the state and the country.

"Nowhere in the city does Chennai Corporation have such a facility exclusively for table tennis. It is the vision and support that the Mylapore MLA has given to this idea since I shared it with him last year that will make this TT complex a reality soon," says Rajesh who is based in Adyar.

The MLA has promised a handsome grant from the MLA constituency development fund.

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## CHRISTMASSY NIGHTS AROUND A CHURCH

The celebrations and vibrancy of this feast have dipped but longtime residents who live around the church on St. Lazarus Church Road try to maintain some traditions.

#### By Dheepti O. J.

There are a few colonies in the neighbourhood which hold up a Christmassy atmosphere. And one of them are the houses on the streets around Our Lady of Guidance Church in R. A. Puram.

Brightly lit stars, wreaths, buntings of bells and lamps and decorated Christmas trees greet you in the small and big houses clustered around the church.

The church too had a grand Christmas decoration on its campus. "The decorations will remain till the feast of Epiphany (Jan. 6)," says Saranaa, a resident of one of the church-owned houses on Lazarus Church Road.

Narrow streets running perpendicular to this road, including Periyapalli Street and Malayappan Street, are home to many old houses, which have been developed into apartment complexes or independent houses in recent years.

Most are Christian families.

Every house puts up a Christmas tree and a crib that represents the Nativity scene.

Senior resident F. J. Vincent, who now resides on Leith Castle South Street, says that most of the families in this zone located off San Thome High Road, including his family, find their roots from the Naicker community in south Tamil Nadu. "Over a century ago, families from the Naicker community from Madurai and Tirunelveli came here and settled in this part of Mylapore. Later, they converted to Christianity," he says.

The family of Jean Lazarus, have been living at Periyapalli Street for some six generations. "Christmas is a time for celebration," she says.

At Jean's house, the family started preparing homemade sweets a week before the festival. This year, they made rose cookies, kul-kuls, muruku, mysore pak, adhirasam and rava laddoo. "It takes time but we enjoy preparing the snacks," says Jean.

Later, the goodies jointly prepared by Jean, his mother Catherine and wife Mau





1. J. J. Saranaa with the crib at his house

- 2. Family of Jean Lazarus
- 3. Christmas snacks made by the Jean Lazarus family

reen were packed in aluminium containers and distributed to friends and relatives. "People eagerly wait for our murukku, " said the 70-something-old Catherine. "We make it using rice and green gram so it has a unique taste."

On the Christmas day (Dec 25), this family had made mutton biriyani, chicken fry, pachadi varieties - mango, brinjal, coconut and cucumber. Says Jean, a retired IT professional, "We also distributed some 30 packets of biriyani to the needy people across this area. This is our small act of charity."

Jean recalls a time when streams of guests and relatives used to land up at their house for Christmas. "Years ago, when my father, S. Lazarus was around, our tiny house used to be lively this time of the year. Most were my father's friends and they would enjoy the grand Christmas lunch and sing carols. However, after his passing the guests have dwindled," he says.

Close by, 71 year old Champa Edward of Malayappan Street preferred to have a crib that she received as prize in the 1950s "When I was seven years old, I received the crib as a prize for a competition at my Catechism class in church. As that was one of the first prizes I received, I'm sentimentally attached to it," said Champa.

The family had put up a Christmas tree decorated with only white and silver decorations. "It looks beautiful at night," says Champa. "We enjoy decorating the Christmas tree and so, every year we come up with a different theme, "says Meena Alex (Champa's sister), who has come over from Banglore for this Christmas.

Meena says that her daughter Sheeba Anand and their family who live in the USA visit them every alternate year and sometimes extend their stay till Christmas. "This time they left a little early." This family has a tradition of making

vadas on the eve of Christmas."Making ulundu vadas and masala vadas on December 24 evening is a tradition that was passed onto us by our grandmother. We prepare and serve them hot to the domestic helpers and to the Corporation's conservancy workers who clean our street," said Meena.

"Apart from attending mid-night Holy Mass at Saint Lazarus Church it is the family time that we spend at home that we look forward to during Christmas," says Champa.

Elsewhere, law student Andrea said her maternal grandmother Nirmala from Ooty had sent laddoo, jangri, and kul-kuls. The day we dropped in Andrea and her parents were visiting Andrea's paternal grandmother's house

on Lazarus Church Road to celebrate Christmas. "As my maternal grandmother hails from Sri Lanka her food preparation is different and tastes awesome." Though

she is over 80 years old, the senior woman parcels and sends sweets to every member of the family even now, said Shamini Gerard, Andrea's mother.

"We also exchange handwritten greeting cards with each other. And I personally enjoy giving gifts with hand-written messages," says Andrea.

Sitting at her house located off Periyapalli Street, Helen cherishes a time when they used to get trees from plant nurseries to set up a Christmas tree. "My husband Chandra Mohan used to get a tree from the Quibble Island area in R.A.Puram. Hawkers also used to sell them," she says.

Christmas celebrations have become muted because most residents of this area are old in age. A neighbour helped Helen put together the Christmas tree and a lit star. "Earlier, my four sisters and I would make murukku and adhirasams at home," she says. Not any more.

Some families here eagerly await the arrival of NRI relatives at Christmas time. But visa issues thwart these plans.

Catherina Norbert and her sister Elza had an impressive crib at their house on St. Lazarus Church Road. The young girls had also illuminated the handmade crib. "Ahead of Christmas, we plan and create a theme-based crib. This year we bought toy grass and pebbles to set the Nativity scene with a garden theme." Their house was also lit with colourful serials lights. Catherina's uncle J. J Saranaa who works as a PT master in a school nearby says that their family friend, an electrician helps them with the decorations.

Saranaa, a longtime resident of the area says that he misses the street carolling that used to take place in this area some 40 years ago. "Those days, streets used to come alive when choirs of local area churches carolled every night. We miss it very much now," he says.

## **HOLIDAY NOTICE**

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## Construction of Mandaveli Post Office in final phase



By Our Staff Reporter

The construction of a new building for Mandaveli Post Office is in its final phase.

The new complex is located at the junction of R. K. Mutt Road and Mandaveli Street adjoining Mandaveli market on one side, having been raised on the plot where the old post office stood.

Four floors have been built. And it's outer walls are fitted with red and white coloured slabs and this gives the building a distinct look in the colours of the postal department.

The interior work is to be executed too.

The office does not have a lift facility. Hence, many feel people, especially seniors might find it difficult to access the counters on floors one and two.

Some postal clients of this area also believe there is a possibility of R. A. Puram post office merging with this office, as its current location - near Mandaveli MTC bus depot - is marked by the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) for phase 2 of the rail project.

Though the postal staff at R. A. Puram had said that the owners of the property had asked them to leave, there is no official word on the merger of the two offices.





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View the event via live streaming
Further details at Palkhivalafoundation2002@gmail.com

Please be in your seats by 4.15 p.m.

#### **ALUMNI MEET**

Lady Sivaswami Ayyar Girls School, Mylapore will be celebrating their 82nd 'Old students Reunion Day' on Jan. 26. This year the 1970 batch of students will complete 50 years and the 1995 batch will complete 25 years. These two batches will lead the celebration this year. Old students can contact the school at 24641513.





#### Jan 9 - 12, 2020

**Sundaram Finance Mylapore Festival** 2020 edition opens on January 9 and runs till the 12th. Offering over 40 events at a dozen venues and featuring over 100 artistes. In and around Sri Kapali Temple, Mylapore.

## TRADITIONAL GAMES - CONTESTS

#### DAYAKATTAM

Jan.11. Report at 5 p.m. Contest starts at 5.30 p.m. Venue: Hall inside Lady Sivaswamy Ayyar Girls School.

Info: Separate contest for adults and children. No registration required. Participants must bring Dayakattam board / sheet. Contestants will be selected by draw of lots. Duration; 60mins. Prizes will be delivered home.

#### PALANKUZHI

Jan.12. Report at 5 p.m. Contest starts at 5.30 p.m. - Venue: Hall inside Lady Sivaswamy Ayyar Girls School. Info: Separate contest for adults and children. No registration required. Participants must bring palapkuzhi set

children. No registration required.
Participants must bring palankuzhi set.
Contestants will be selected by draw
of lots. Duration; 60mins. Prizes will be
delivered home.

## KOLAM & RANGOLI - CONTESTS

#### KOLAM CONTESTS

On January 11 and on 12. Starts 3.45 p.m. Venue: North Mada Street (east end of road) Info: Open to all. Report at registration desk at venue at 3.00 p.m. and register.

Participants must design only traditional puli kolam. Prizes for the best designs.

## ● RANGOLI CONTEST On January 12. Starts 3.45 p.m.

Venue: North Mada Street (east end of road) Info: Spot registration at 3.30 p.m.

Open to first 30 people.
Four varieties of colour powder will be provided. You may bring your powders too. Theme for Rangoli: Pongal festival. Prizes for

the best designs.





#### Jan 9 - 12, 2020

Sundaram Finance Mylapore Festival 2020 edition opens on January 9 and runs till the 12th. Offering over 40 events at a dozen venues and featuring over 100 artistes. In and around Sri Kapali Temple, Mylapore.

#### **HERITAGE FOR CHILDREN**

Jan.12 / Sunday. 4 p.m. At Navaratri Mantap, Sri Kapali Temple. *Pradeep Chakravarthy* narrates legends and lore associated with this temple to children (7 yrs plus) and shows them around. Children must bring drawing book and color pens/pencils to draw on the spot. Free. Parents can join

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Info: No registration required.
Participants must bring palankuzhi set.
Contestants will be selected by draw
of lots. Duration; 60mins. Prizes will be
delivered home.

#### **CHESS TOURNEY FOR CHILDREN**

(held in association with Dharmakesari Solar Chess Club). On January 11 (Saturday) &

on January 12 (Sunday). Time: 8:15 am to 10:15 am Venue: Chess Square, Nageswara Rao Park,

Children will be grouped under three categories - Under 8, Under 10 and Under 12. · Under 8 – born on or after 1/1/2012. · Under 10 – born on or after 1/1/2010. · Under 12 – born on or after 1/1/2008. Open to 60 registrations. 3 prizes and one consolation prize for each category. To register, call 94458-66509 between 10:00 am & 5:00 pm.

#### **WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN**

Workshop I: Tanjore Style of Painting
Date: January 11 (Saturday). Time: 8 am - 10 am.
Venue: Nageswara Rao Park, Luz.
Age group: 8 – 12 years. All art materials are provided

by Sundaram Finance for this free workshop restricted to 25 children. To register, call 94458-66508 between 10:00 am & 5:00 pm.

Workshop II: Clay Sculpting Date: January 12 (Sunday) Time: 8 am -10 am

Venue: Nageswara Rao Park, Luz Age group: 8 – 12 years All art materials are provided by Sundaram Finance for this free workshop restricted to 25 children.

To register, call 94458-66508 between 10:00 am &



## **MYLAPORE FESTIVAL**

## **SNAPSHOTS**

- 1. Historian Dr. Chithra Madhavan led a Walk last Sunday of six old temples of Mylapore.
- 2. Students of Natyam at Dr. MGR-Janaki College for Women, R. A. Puram presented a medley of Bharatanatyam and folk dances.
- 3. Choir music by students of Kamala Music School conducted by guru Rajarajeshwari

4 & 5. Folk artistes from Telangana, who are here to perform at Dakshinachitra performed on the main stage, Bonalu, which is an ancient form of celebrating goddess Kali in the twin cities of Hyderabad-Secunderabad region.

6. Nagaswaram music sets the tone for the evening performances on the main stage - by artistes of guru Mylai Rajendran

7, 8 & 9. 'Thirumayilai Kuravanji' was the big show for the evening of Day One, January 9. The rituals and processions of the gods from and to Sri Kapali Temple on the occasion of arudra darisanam (Jan.10) caused a delay for the staging of the dance-drama. The kuravanji theme is on princess Karpagavalli's love for lord Kapaleeswarar of Mayilai and her pining and

how a kurathi she summons predicts the good things that are to befall her. Senior dancers Roja Kannan and Priya Murle led their group of dancers for this act which was held in place by Sasirekha Balasubramanian who played the 'kattiyakaran'. When the last scene closed it was well past 11 p.m. but there were some 200 people still in their seats in the open

air in Sannithi Street

quadrangle.





Jan 11 - 17, 2020 **MYLAPORE TIMES** 

## **MYLAPORE FESTIVAL**

## **SNAPSHOTS**



- 1. Young Shakthi Muralidharan presented a solo Carnatic music concert at Nageswara Rao Park in Luz on Day Two of the festival.
- 2. The Food Street created on Sundareswarar Street is always a big draw for visitors of the festival.
- 3. Plants and ecofriendly products on display on East Tank Street that runs alongside the temple tank.
- 4. Exhibition of photos of Mylapore of the 70s - on South Mada Street.
- 5. Members of citybased Self-Help Groups spread their wares to sell in one of the streets adjoining the temple.

WATCH videos of the celebrations at www.youtube.com/mylaporetv











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## Arudra Darshanam





#### By Dheepti O. J.

Colourful decorations and traditional rituals marked Arudra darshanam at Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple in Mylapore.

The celebration began on January 9 evening, on the occasion Thiruvathirai (or Arudra) nakshatram (star) in the Thamizh month of margazhi. The event is auspicious as on this day, lord Shiva is believed to have given darshan in his dancing form as lord Natarajar.

Preparations for the rituals at this temple started after 6 pm. at the Navaratri mandapam here.

The panchamurthis - Sri Vinayagar, Sri Kapaleeswarar, Sri Karpagambal, Sri Murugar, and Sri Chandikeshwarar, all decorated with bright yellow roses and violet saamandi flowers were placed on the stage.

An hour later, music from the nadaswaram and tavil sounded the beginning of pon oonjal ceremony. The music was also a call to devotees to crowd at this space.

The idols of Sri Kapaleeswarar and Karpagambal were placed on the oonjal (swing) facing each other. Even as the deities were gently swung, the smartphones of devotees went up to capture the action.

The ceremony included the enactment of a scene where saint Maanikkavaasagar had sung Thiruvampavai and songs from the pon oonjal padigam (religious hymns) in front of Sri Kapaleeswarar.

Just past 8 p.m., the panchamurtis led by Sri Vinayagar, all set on palanquins were taken out, in a procession to the 16-pillared mandapam on Sannidhi Street.

The five deities undertook a veedi purappadu procession and when they re-

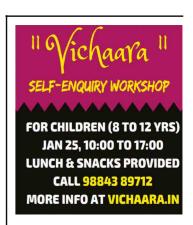
turned, the richly-decorated deity of Sri Natarajar was taken to the Thirukalyana mandapam near Sri Saneeswarar Sannidhi.

There the maha abhishekam (one of the six most important abhishekam that takes place for Natarajar in a year) took place. The chief priests performed the abhishekam well past 11 p.m., using milk, curd, honey, and a variety of fruits. The ritual is special also because this

image is taken out into the public only once in a year - during this festival.

Early Friday morning, arudra darshanam was held. And hundreds of devotees were present inside the temple to catch a glimpse of Sri Natarajar, who was decorated with 10-ft long garland of fresh flowers, weighing some 80 kilos.









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- ALWERPET New 3BR Flat 1350 sq.ft Veg Rs.33000/-. R. A. Puram 2BR Flat 1000 sq.ft Carpark Rs.27000/-. 3BR Flat 1250 sq.ft Rs.32000/-. Abiramapuram 2BR Flat 1100 sq.ft. Res/ Office. Ph: 95661 75961/ 98845 87579.

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## TWO TALKS: AT VINTAGE HOUSE IN PELATHOPE

A one-hundred years old house in Pelathope in Mylapore is the venue for two public talks being held as part of the Sundaram Finance MYLAPORE FESTIVAL.

On Saturday, January 11, 6 p.m. onwards Jaishri P. Rao will present a talk on the histories, heritage and cuisine of the small Thanjavur Maharashtrian community. Rao recently published a book on this subject and her talk is based on material she has collected over time.

On Sunday, January 12, 6 p.m. onwards Padmapriya Baskaran whose passion has been to detail online, hundreds of significant but relegated temples/ shrines of Tamil Nadu will talk on 'Gods of the





Padmapriya Baskaran

Holy Koovam' River'. Padmapriya has published a book on this subject.

There will be a question-answer session at the end of each talk.

Open to all: limited parking available in this area.

## **ELECTORAL ROLLS CHECK, CORRECTIONS: FACILITY AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC THIS WEEKEND**

The this weekend, voters were invited to inspect the electoral rolls that were made available to people by local government officials at Chennai Corporation offices in your backyard.

People also submitted forms required to  $% \left\{ 1\right\} =\left\{ 1\right\} =\left\{$ 

carry out any corrections that may be there officially against your name.

A similar exercise will be held this weekend – Jan.11 and 12. Look out for counters at schools in your neighbourhood which are also your local voting centres.

#### SALE OF KHADI PRODUCTS

A sale of Khadi India products from Gandhigram Khadi Trust is on till January 12 at Sarangi store, 138, Luz Church Road (opp. Alwarpet Sri Anjaneyar Temple).

Products on sale include Muslin khadi sarees, Idaikkal khadi sarees, T. Subbulapuram khadi sarees, Khadi yardage (fabrics by the metre) in natural dyes and Khadi yardage (fabrics by the metre) in azofree dyes.

The store is open from 10 am to 8 pm.

#### **ART WORKSHOP**

Intermediate Watercolour landscapes workshop led by senior artist Amit Kapoor from Delhi, where you learn advanced watercolour techniques. The workshop will include these art supplies from Mijello worth 6700. Paid workshop.

On Jan 11 & 12, 10am to 6 pm at Karya Space, Mylapore. Contact: 9790995771. Organised by: Hindustan Trading Company. All materials provided and prior registration is required.

#### CRAFT BAZAAR: AT SIVASWAMI KALALAYA

A craft bazaar was inaugurated at Sir Sivaswami Kalalaya Senior Secondary School, Mylapore on Jan. 9. Students who have been working on art and craft pieces for a few weeks now are displaying their work. The display is on till Jan. 11 noon. A margazhi cultural festival will also be held at the school on Jan. 11 to mark National Youth Day. S. Manasa, an alumna, will present a dance programme.

This school is on Sundareswarar Street, Mylapore.

## Thyagaraja aradhana in Mylapore

Two groups will be celebrating Sri Thyagaraja Aradhana mahotsavam next week, a celebration of the great Carnatic music composer's music to commemorate his samadhi in Thiruvaiyaru, Thanjavur.

◆ At Mathala Narayanan Street, guru Rukmini Ramani and senior vocalists Yogam Santhanam and Rajam will lead a group to sing the famed pancharathna krithis on January 15. This will be held inside a house at 12, Mathala Narayanan Street, Mylapore. Ph: 24613226.

This family has carried on the Thygaraja tradition for very many years.

• At Sri Thiagaraja Sangeetha Vidwath Samajam, the festival will be held from Jan. 14 to 23. The event will be inaugurated by R. Vaithiyanathan, secretary, Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Mylapore on Jan. 14. Dr. R. Vedavalli, president of the Samajam, presides. A concert by Trichur Ramachadran and group will follow.

On Jan. 15, bahula panchami and aradhana Day, events to be held include an upanishad reading and veda parayanam, unchavrithi bhajans and an abhishekam. Later, a host of musicians will render Thyagaraja's pancharatna kirthis.

On the last day, Jan. 23, the portrait of Sri Thiagaraja will be taken on a procession by artistes. The event will end with Anjaneya utsavam.

### INDIA'S VICE-PRESIDENT TO LAUNCH CENTENARY OF THAMIZH MAGAZINE

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore is conducting a year-long celebration of the centenary of its Thamizh magazine 'Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam', this year.

The inaugural event will be held on Jan. 12 at Narada Gana Sabha, Alwarpet. The vice president of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu, will inaugurate the event. The guests of honour are Governor of Tamilnadu, Banwarilal Purohit and C. Vijayabaskar, state minister for health and family welfare.

Benediction will be made by Swami Gautamanandaji, vice president, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, Kolkata.

The event starts at 10.30 a.m.



## **COMMUNITY**



#### **HELPING THE NEEDY**

On Dec 17, the members of Luz Church Women's Fellowship (LCWF) distributed Christmas hampers to the needy. The event was held that evening at Our Lady of Light Church, Luz.

The items in the hamper included provisions like rice, oil, sugar, and dhal. They were procured from the donations made by the Church community.

For the past 25 years, the women from the fellowship have been carrying out this work to help families belonging to lower-income groups during Christmas. This year, around 70 families received the hampers.

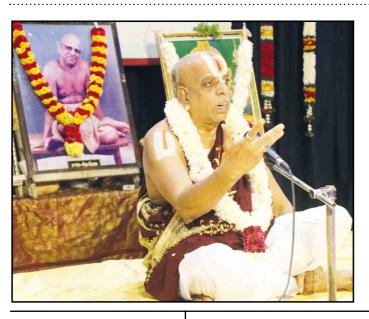
#### **DANCE SCHOOL'S DANCE FEST**



As a prelude to the Margazhi season, Alwarpet based Sri Lasya Priya School of Bharatanatyam organised a two day Bharatanatyam festival 'Arudra' on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 at Sri Kapali Temple, Mylapore.

The school, headed by guru Sreedevi Priya Sriram, launched this initiative to encourage young artistes from other dance schools to display their talent.

The programme commenced with a Bharatanatyam presentation by the students of the host school. Later, the students who performed were honoured with certificates, cash and gifts. The respective gurus and accompanying artistes were honoured too.



#### MARGAZHI DEVOTION

On the first day of the margazhi season, bhajan-singing groups began the rounds of Mada Streets around Sri Kapali Temple in Mylapore. Sabhas are also hosting morning sessions of Thiruppavai upanyasam and Namasankeerthanam which are open to all.

Photo featured here is of Prof. M. A. Venkatakrishnan Swamy, retired head of the Dept. of Vaishavism, University of Madras who presented the upanyasam daily.

At Narada Gana Sabha's mini hall in Alwarpet.



#### **SAN THOME SLUGGERS**

At the Republic Day state level Under-17 Boxing tournament held at Dharmapuri recently, three students from San Thome School, San Thome won laurels. Sri Ram Vaishnav and Moideen Irfan won the gold medal and S. Ramana won the silver medal. The tournament was conducted by the School Education Department.

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Classical Music - Junior (Std. I to IV) - Vocal Poetry Recitation - Senior (Std. V to IX)

February 2, 2020 -

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#### VINCENT D'SOUZA

He got a handsome round of applause when he danced. He received lots of claps when he sat with three other dancers on the stage for a quick fire Q&A session. And when he stepped out of the auditorium, there were many friends and dancers who wanted to say hello.

Bharatanatyam dancer Praveen Kumar must have been in the seventh heaven that morning at Sri Krishna Gana Sabha. He and three others - Navia Natarajan, Janaki Rangarajan and Lavanya Ananth had taken part in an interesting session for the annual Natya Kala Conference here. A session that looked at critiquing concerts. Dance concerts in this case.

These four Bharatanatyam dancers had worked on four different pieces independently and presented them 'live' for the first time on the sabha stage that morning and the conference curator, dancer Rama Vaidyanathan had invited four critics/editors to watch the artistes, adjourn to a room, jot down their critique of the recital assigned to them, come back on stage and present their notes.

Praveen had his moments in the spotlight at this session. And he was candid and free-flowing his his thoughts."People used to tell me and still tell me that I look scrawny and do not have a dancer's body so I wouldn't go far in my career but I have been dancing for over 20 years now so that must say a lot for my dance," he said.

Bengaluru-based Praveen has come a long way, that too for a male dancer. He is often traveling for concerts, he has a busy teaching schedule and in-between, he is curating new dance items for himself or for his senior students. This December Season, he performed for two leading organisations.

I have been attending the Natya Kala Conference for over a decade now at Sri Krishna Gana Sabha although this means sacrificing my Christmas week break. Some sessions are engaging. As are some short recitals of works in progress.

But this year's conference was a resounding success. There was a full house on all the five mornings, a majority of participants were young and from all corners of India and they took a keen interest in most sessions. They applauded all the artistes and speakers on stage, and made heroes and heroines of some of them.

This dance conference was by far the most outstanding facet of December Season 2019. It was lively and colorful, it had zing and enthusiasm and it had lots of education too - from the very well-known masters.

When I curated the *Mylapore Festival* for this year, I purposely chose to end the string of performances on the main stage every evening, with a Bharatanatyam dance production. So four dance productions on four evenings.

This is done with a purpose.

We would like people who do not step into auditoria or into sabha halls for concerts to watch classical dance in the open air. And we cannot get a better location than the Sannithi Street quadrangle to set up the big stage and let the illuminated 16-pillared mantapam and the tall, east gopuram of Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple be the backdrop of all the performances - classical, folk, traditional.

Putting a festival of this nature in a heritage zone in the city is just not easy. Especially, when some people wonder why we wish to stage dances and music where vans and cars must be parked and where access to businesses can be affected.

The temple zone of Mylapore has been and continues to be 'commercialised' and chaos heaped on chaos. Had we a strong civic body which treated heritage zones they way we must, there would be many places in our city - not just Mylapore - which would not only retain their vintage look and feel but also serve as stages for open-air cultural events inside neighbourhoods.



MYLAPORE TIMES, Shop No. 27, II Floor, 77, C.P. Ramaswamy Road, Alwarpet, Chennai-18

Letters to the Editor, whether sent by ordinary post, email or courier, must carry the complete postal address of the correspondent

#### Canteen sapad prices were very high

The prices of *sapad* (meal served on banana leaf) at sabha canteens last December for the music season were too high. You cannot expect an average rasika to shell out Rs.400 plus for a

meal however special it may be.

And as it happened, the people with thick wallets did not mind standing in a queue to get the sapad tokens.

Cannot sabhas who engage canteens ask the canteen bosses to fix prices we can all afford?

- Lakshman Rao, R. A. Puram





## Hope new Mandaveli Post Office has facilities for seniors

The news that the new Mandaveli Post Office is getting ready and is to open soon is good news in the new year.

From the outside, it looks to be a good facility. But we also hope that the Post Department ensures that all the counters and services are located and designed so as to be of easy access and use by seniors who are the biggest customers at post offices.

This is very important in a new facility.

- Melarkode Raman Krishnan

#### On T. M. Krishna

A recent edition of Mylapore Times carried the picture of vocalist T. M. Krishna's concert that was held at P. S. High school auditorium on Dec.26 under the auspices of Sri Guruvayur Dorai Trust.

I was one among his countless rasikas who thronged the venue and was also one among those unlucky to get inside.

The speakers who spoke at a previous concert event here appreciated Guruvayur Dorai's efforts in not only arranging T M Krishna's concert as part of their annual event in spite of his avowed decision of abstention from the December music season.

Krishna's dress sense is always impeccable though he looked different in his black attire on that day, which was presumably in solidarity with a protest group holding differing views on a national issue.

- K. Swaminathan

#### Pradosham; managing movement of devotees at temple gates

Recently, after attending the 'pradosham' at Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple, many of us, mostly seniors were trapped in the rush to get out.

We then realized that hundreds of devotees who were leaving the temple premises through the OUT gate found that it was blocked by parked two-wheelers.

Now, the temple managers have set up metal barricades to the west side of the 16-pillars mantapam on Sannidhi Street and this space is used only for vahanams and the like.

But we suggest that on pradosham days, this space be kept open and used for parking two-wheelers and that space around temple is kept free for devotees to enter and exit

> - Veeraswami Venkataraman, Mandavelipakkam

#### Warm words for Metrowater officer

After many years we have been getting good Metrowater supply in our sump. We should all be thankful to the services of local officer Naveen Kumar who had taken initiative to clear all the sludge in the local pipes. The work was on for over two days. He had to face the criticism from Chennai Corporation authorities for no fault of his but for the public cause to help the people of this area.

We are grateful to him and his team. Such officials can make a big difference.

- Jayanthi Sankar, Alamelumangapuram



## Jan 9 - 12, 2020

**Sundaram Finance Mylapore Festival 2020** edition opens on January 9 and runs till the 12th. Offering over 40 events at a dozen venues and featuring over 100 artistes. In and around Sri Kapali Temple, Mylapore.

#### MAIN STAGE CULTURAL SHOWS

Venue: Sannidhi Street. (outside east gopuram of Sri Kapali Temple)

#### January 9, Thursday

6.30 p.m.: Nagaswaram by students of guru Mylai Rajendran 7.00 p.m.: Music by students of guru Rajarajeshwari,

Kamala Music School, Chennai

7.30 p.m.: Folk Dance & Music - by Indira Nruthya Academy, Telangana 8.00 p.m.: Folk Dances - by students of Department of Natya,

MGR Janaki College of Arts & Science for Women, Chenna 8.30 p.m : 'Thirumayilai Kuravanji': Bharatanatyam dance-drama of 'Parashaha'. Featuring Roja Kannan, Priya Murle,

Sasirekha Balasubramaniam and other dancers.

#### January 10, Friday

6.30 p.m.: Nagaswaram by students of guru Mylai Rajendran

7.00 p.m.: Instrumental music concert by students of Thamizh Isai Kalloori, Chennai

7.30 p.m.: Kuchipudi dance recital by students of 'Saila Sudha'.

Guru: Sailaja

8.00 p.m.: Folk Dance & Music - by Indira Nruthya Academy, Telangana

8.30 p.m.: 'Param'; Bharatanatyam dance-drama. Featuring guru V. Balagurunathan and dancers of Krishanjali Academy, Chennai.

#### January 11, Saturday

5.30 p.m.: Nadaswaram by students of guru Mylai Rajendran

6.00 p.m.: Music concert by students of Thamizh Isai Kalloori, Chennai

6.30 p.m.: Dance recital by students of

guru Sujata Mohan, Padmashree Nrithyalaya

7.00 p.m.: Indian music choir concert. By BEAT Choir, Chennai

8.00 p.m.: 'Vande Mataram': Bharatanatyam and folk dance production. Featuring dancers of guru Sheela Unnikrishnan, Sridevi Nrithyalaya, Chennai.

#### January 12, Sunday

5.30 p.m.: Nadaswaram by students of guru Mylai Rajendran

6.00 p.m.: Mallakhamb - Indian gymnastics show. By

Tamizhan Mallakhamb Sports Academy, Chennai. 6.30 p.m. : Dance recital by students of guru Aarthi Madhumita,

Koothambalam dance school, Chennai.

7.00 p.m.: 'Spirit of Mylapore' award function

7.30 p.m.: Folk dance - by students of Thamizh Isai Kalloori, Chennai

8.00 p.m.: 'Thennadudaya Sivane Potri' - Bharatanatvam dance-drama. Choreographed by guru Sasirekha Raammohan. Featuring dancers of Kanagasabai School of Bharatanatyam, Chennai and guest artistes.

#### OTHER EVENTS

#### CONCERTS IN THE PARK

Venue: Nageswara Rao Park, Luz. (Mikes, speakers are not used in these classical music concerts)

Jan. 9, 7.00 a.m. - Sruthilaya School students.

Guru - Suresh Raman Jan. 10, 7.00 a.m. - Shakthi Muralidharan

- disciple of guru Amritha Murali and guru Sattur Lalitha Santhanam

Jan. 11, 7.00 a.m. - Paavani Cotah - disciple of guru T. R. Vasudevan

Jan. 12, 7.00 a.m. - Students of Madura Ganalaya. Guru- Kamala Ramanathan

#### • EXHIBITIONS (Jan 9 to 12, evenings)

#### **VINTAGE PHOTOS OF MYLAPORE**

Photos of Events, Places and People. Mylapore of 60s and 70s.

Venue: Pavement of South Mada St., opposite Hotel Karpagam.

#### CLOTH DOLLS

Designer Manikandan S. of Chennai displays 50 cloth-based dolls

Venue: Opposite Rasi store, Sannidhi Street.

#### FOOD & SALES

#### ECO PRODUCTS DISPLAY, SALE

- Venue: along Sri Kapali Temple Tank Road ( near west gopuram). Organised by Organic Farmers Market.

#### MARKET of WOMEN SELF-HELP GROUPS Products made by members of Self-Help Groups -

courtesy: TN Women's Corporation

Venue : Kumaraguru Street ( along southside wall of Sri Kapali Temple)

#### TRADITIONAL SNACKS / FOOD CORNER

Venue: Sundareswarar Street (off East Mada Street)

#### • HERITAGE WALKS

#### 1.TEMPLES OF MYLAPORE

JAN. 5 / Sunday. Starts 7 a.m. at Sri Madhava Perumal Temple, Mylapore Free and open to all.

Curated by Dr. Chithra Madhavan.

#### 2.GODDESSES OF MYLAPORE

Jan. 12 / Sunday. Starts 7 a.m. at Sri Madhava Perumal Temple, Mylapore Free and open to all. Curated by Padmapriya Baskaran

#### 3. VINTAGE MYLAPORE HOUSES

Jan.12 / Sunday. Starts at 7 a.m.

at Rasi store entrance. Free and open to all. Curated by architect Tahaer Zoyab, the walk explores a few old houses of Mylapore.

#### 4.FOOD WALK No.I

Jan.10 / Friday. Starts at 5 p.m. at gate of Indian Bank, North Mada Street.

Curated by Sridhar Venkataraman, this Walk explores a few popular snacks places. Free. Open to all. ( you pay for food you buy)

#### 5.FOOD WALK No.2

Jan.11 / Saturday. Starts at 5 p.m.

at gate of Indian Bank, North Mada Street. Curated by Sridhar Venkataraman, this Walk explores a second set of popular food joints. Free. Open to all. ( you pay for food you buy).

#### MUSIC & TALKS

Venue for all three events is a vintage bungalow - 12/42, Vedanta Desikar Swamy Street, Pelathope, Mylapore (opposite Thirumylai MRTS station / off R. K. Mutt Road).

#### Jan.10, 6.30 p.m.

MUSIC CONCERT - songs based on temples of Mylapore. By Bharati Kamakoti with

Puttur T. Nikshith & Nagercoil K. Anand. Jan.11, 6 p.m.

TALK - On Heritage, Celebrations and Cuisine of Thanjavur Maharashtrians. By Jaishri P. Rao.

TALK - On 'Gods of the Holy Koovam (river)'. By Padmapriya Baskaran.



### **VAIKUNTA EKADASI**







#### By Our Staff Reporter

The shukla paksha ekadashi that occurs during the month of margazhi is special as it is believed that the 'Vaikunta Dwaram' or the doors to the Lord's inner sanctum is opened on this day. It is for this reason that devotees line up to walk through the swarga vasal at Vaishnavite

temples. This past week, on January 6, to mark Vaikunta Ekadasi, special rituals were held at all the three local Vaishnavite temples, Sri Madhava Perumal Temple, Sri Adi Kesava Perumal Temple and Sri Vedanta Desikar Temple.

At Sri Madhava Perumal Temple, Mylapore, (seen in the picture on the top and left) the deities (both Perumal and Thayar) were decorated with pearls (muthangi sevai). A veedi purappadu was held in the morning. An official

at the temple says, "More than 2000 devotees were present for the paramapada vasal sevai at 5.30 a.m. In addition to the free darshan queue, Rs.25 tickets were issued for the special darshan queue. We sold more than 3800 of those tickets".

There was a steady stream of devotees who kept coming in all throughout the day. Barricades were set up inside the temple to manage the crowd. Police personnel were seen helping seniors and directing the devotees to the respective lines.

Outside the temple, hawkers occupied most of the space selling everything from flowers and tulsi leaves to vegetables and keerai. Several devotees were seen buying agathu keerai to feed the cows inside the temple campus.

















