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YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWSPAPER

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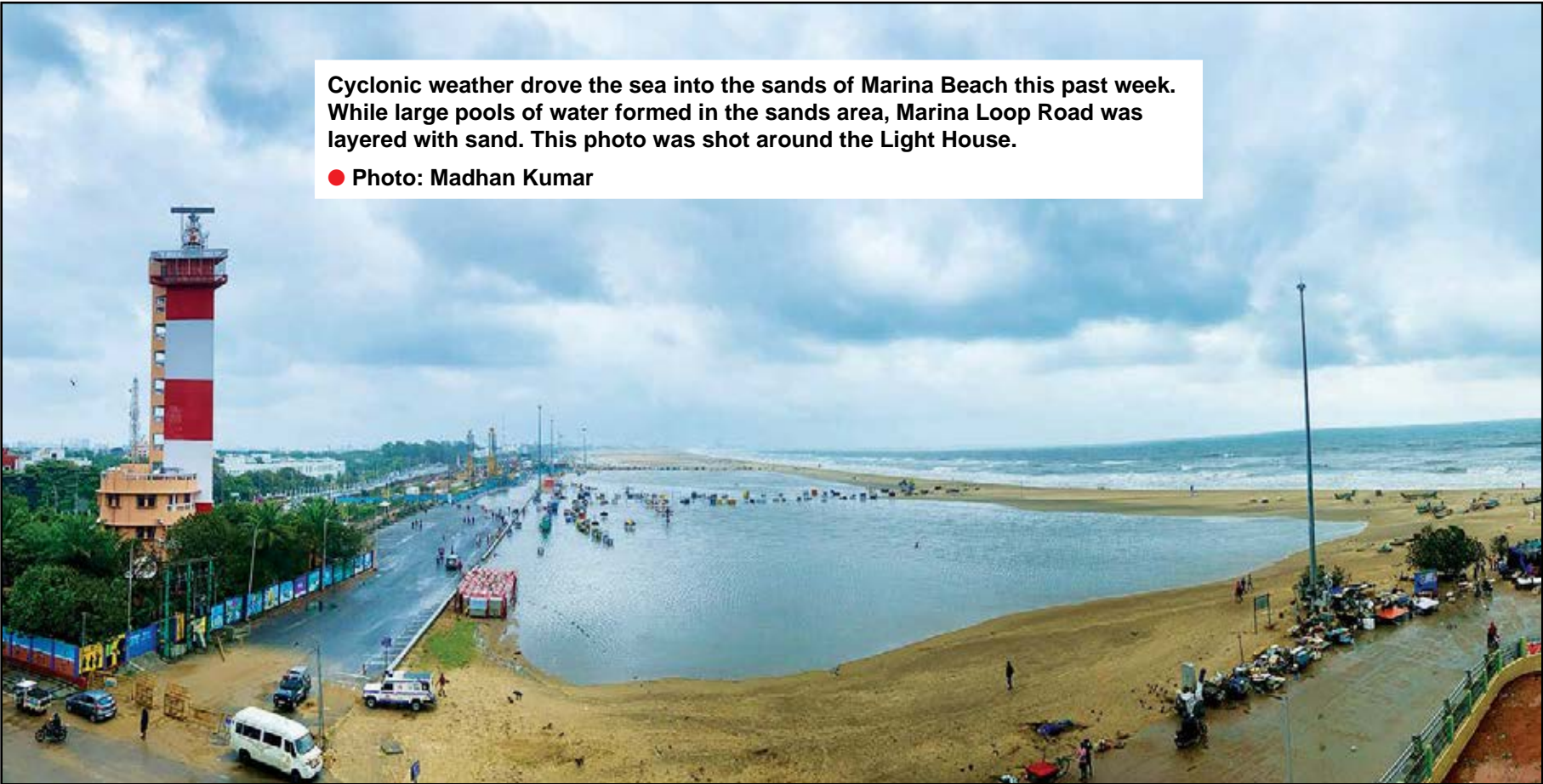
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Cyclonic weather drove the sea into the sands of Marina Beach this past week. While large pools of water formed in the sands area, Marina Loop Road was layered with sand. This photo was shot around the Light House.
● Photo: Madhan Kumar



Adult vaccination campaign



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NOOKS

GURUSAMY NURSERY

Owner: Suthakar A
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Timings: 8 am to
9 pm on all seven
days

Gurusamy Nursery sells materials for home gardening including grow bags,

mud pots, coco peat, organic manure—vermicompost, insecticides like *panchakavyam*, *meenamilam* and so on.

Started by current owner Suthakar's father, M Arasappan, this 18-year-old nursery also sells saplings of rare varieties such as *nagalingappoo*, *vanni* and *vilvam*.

Saplings of flowering plants like hibiscus, *shenbagam*, *manoranjitham*, *pavazhamalli*, *malli*, *kodi sampangi* and *kanakambaram* are available here. The price of flower saplings begins at Rs 20 while whole tree saplings cost Rs 100 onwards.

If you plan to start a kitchen garden, seeds to grow cabbage, radish, brinjal, lady's finger, tomato, etc. as also for indoor plants, snake plants, ZZ plants and so on are sold here.

Suthakar and his team can help you set up a garden and take care of it through monthly or weekly maintenance services. The fee is Rs 800 onwards for a man day's work.

- Report by V. Soundararani

● **SHARE details of your area's Nook that may be useful to all. Mail 3 lines - mytimesedit@gmail.com**



CHECK THIS



COSY CONCERTS

Today, for Carnatic music rasikas, there are venues which offer cosy listening. The garden setting at Sunaadalahari in Alwarpet is one. The mini hall of Narada Gana Sabha, smartly-fitted, is also good, though very few rasikas get in there. Charsur is hosting two concerts, featuring some top artistes at Ramanujam Millenium Hall, D'Silva Road; go for the front row seats here. Look out for Musiri Chamber concert alerts; you sit around the artistes in a drawing room at this Alwarpet house.

THIRUPPAVAI

Kalyanapuram Aaravamudachariar leads the Thiruppavai upanayam series at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Dec. 18 onwards, daily 7 am. For 90 mins and open to all.

Kidambi Narayanan's discourses are at Narada Gana Sabha: they are on now and go on till Pongal day. For an hour, 7.15 am onwards.



SABHA CANTEENS

By this weekend, the canteen at the main Mylapore sabha halls would be abuzz. Checking out the traditional food early is a good idea. Canteens at Mylapore Fine Arts Club (MFAC), Narada Gana Sabha and Music Academy are the destinations. All of them offer breakfast, 7 a.m. onwards. The elai sapat at Academy's and MFAC's canteens are big spreads (Rs. 475/500 - 16 items promised). Tiffin follows, post-lunch; canteens are open as late as 9.30 pm.

VINTAGE CARS

Love classic automobiles? Head to AVM Rajeswari Kalyana Mantapam on Dr. R K Salai this weekend where Madras Heritage Motoring Club is displaying a stunning array of cars and vehicles from another century. Show is open on Sat. (11 am to 6 pm) and Sun. (11 am to 4 pm). Free

■ Have info to share here? Mail - mytimesedit@gmail.com

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Margazhi has broken

By Our Edit Team

Mylapore woke up to the first morning of the margazhi season with the sights and sounds that mark this period.

In the inner streets - Sadayappan Street, New Street and Sri Kapali East Tank Street, we were greeted by an array of kolams at doorsteps - some coloured, some classic; some small, some large; some designed at midnight, some drawn before dawn.

And even as dawn broke, on the mada streets around Sri Kapali Temple, at least three groups of people had begun their bhajan rounds. One, mostly made up of women, was led by children who, with some props, reflected the traditions of margazhi.

The late Papanasam Sivan's bhajan tradition was also continued since this morning; the well-known composer's daughter led a small group of women who sang and performed with vigour.

The groups ended their morning offering on Sannidhi Street and some had arranged for light breakfast, with members having to go early to work.



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20th December, 2022 to 1st January, 2023

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on December 20th, 2022 at 5.30 pm
Chief Guest: **Dr. Chandra Mohan B. I.A.S.,**
(Principal Secretary to Government, Tourism, Culture and Religious
Endowments Department, Government of Tamil Nadu)
Venue: Bharata Kalakshetra Auditorium
Kalakshetra Foundation, Thiruvananthapuram - 41

PROGRAMME

20th Dec, 6.00 pm	'Krishnamari Kuravanji' by Kalakshetra Foundation	25th Dec, 6.00 pm	Pung Cholom & Dhol Dholak Cholom by Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy
21st Dec, 6.00 pm	'Purulia Chhau' by Trambok Club Chandan Smriti Chhau Dance Troupe	7.15 pm	Bharatanatyam by Kalakshetra Foundation
7.15 pm	Odissi performance by Aruna Mohanty & Group	26th Dec, 6.00 pm	Hindustani vocal by Pandit Venkatesh Kumar
22nd Dec, 6.00 pm	'Thaayambaka' by Mattannur Sankarankutty & Group	27th Dec, 6.00 pm	'Kannappur Kuravanji' by Kalakshetra Foundation
7.15 pm	'Laya Samagaama' featuring Mattannur Sankarankutty, Patri Satish Kumar, Yogesh Samsi, Mannargudi M. R. Vasudevan, Kottikal Ravi, Devu Khan and Mahmood Khan	28th Dec, 6.00 pm	'Karna Sapatham' by Kalakshetra Foundation
23rd Dec, 6.00 pm	'Bhakta Jayadeva' by Kalakshetra Foundation	29th Dec, 6.00 pm	'Chitravina' by Shri. Ravikiran
24th Dec, 6.00 pm	Carnatic vocal by Shri. Sanjay Subrahmanyam	30th Dec, 6.00 pm	Jugalbandhi by Dr. Sudha Ragnathan and Smt. Ashwini Bhide
		31st Dec, 6.00 pm	'Choodamani Pradanam' by Kalakshetra Foundation
		1st Jan, '23, 6.00 pm	'Maha Pattabhishekam' by Kalakshetra Foundation

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VINCENT'S JOTTINGS

By VINCENT D' SOUZA

Many weeks ago, one morning, I noticed three workers of the local unit of our civic body amble to the street junction to start some work.

It became apparent that they were clearing vegetation that had grown wild along the sham pavements in our colony.

Ten minutes later, the two men who were at the work spot, were not to be seen.

A lone woman toiled, taking small breaks.

She later told me that she got this job after her husband, a GCC staffer, passed away while in service.

Across two mornings, the workers had cleared the vegetation of one street, some 800 metres long. I do not think similar work was undertaken in the other streets.

Weeks before this, one local GCC worker knocked on my door. He wanted us to trim the bougainvillea which creates a green screen atop our compound wall. "We have got a complaint that the branches are protruding into the street," the man said.

I said I would need time to get my gardener to get the trim done.

By then, another GCC man had landed up. He wanted the pruning to be done at once; he claimed that the men working on add-ons to the local stormwater drain would find it hard to work under the dipping bougainvillea branches. An argument followed and the GCC staff left, once they were convinced I would do what I could.

Our city's civic body, at its core, is a grey area. You only have to take a close look at its local area units to understand how poorly equipped GCC is, to deal with core civic issues.

The past week, the cyclone ripped hundreds and hundreds of trees. Many came down, thousands of branches crashed and loads of deadwood was seen strewn on streets. True, civic workers attended to the issue at once. They were seen working even at midnight. Urbaser staff were asked to clear inner streets of the vegetation.

These efforts of Chennai Corporation earned it all round appreciation. It was welcome and timely and worthy.

But, let us raise the more core issue here. Does the GCC really have local teams whose job is to look after and tend to avenue trees, trim shrubs on road medians and clear wild vegetation growing along pavements?

Do we ever see such workers doing the rounds of colonies, to knock off dead branches and trim large trees? No.

If ever, the odd team lands up if some VIP complains that tree cover is cutting off street lighting. And these workers often do a crude job. They are not trained in maintaining greenery.

No wonder avenue trees crash down and streets are littered with vegetation waste, when it rains heavily or our seasonal cyclones hit this city.

We plant saplings, hold 'green' campaigns. All this is good.

But where is the year-round management of public spaces and trees in this city?



LETTERS FROM READERS

Letters to the Editor must carry the complete postal address of the correspondent.
Mail to - mytimesedit@gmail.com

Tribute: D. Kaveri

● Shocked to hear the news of the passing away of Sri Kapali Temple's executive officer, D. Kaveri. She was a very sincere, honest and humble officer. She was very polite with her co-officers and junior staff.

- K. Suresh Kumar

● The news of temple officer Kaveri's death was very shocking. She was taken away at a young age. She was a strict and honest officer. She was also an ardent devotee of Karpagambal and Kapaleeswarar.

- Vedha

Tribute: Manohar Devadoss

Manohar Devadoss, the writer and artist who passed away last week, was amicable, humane, humorous, versatile... a true 'karma yogi' who accepted life in all its ups and downs. We are blessed to have known him, interacted with him, along with my family members, and gathered several insights. We treasure them all in the folds of our heart.

- Hema Ravi

Chennai Metro and Kutchery Road shops

● This is with regard to the state of local shops affected by Chennai Metro. Those who have been running their business for 60 to 135 years on Kutchery Road would definitely have enough savings and maybe own the property here and can manage till they find alternative space.

Those who really suffer, suffer silently; those who are comfortable always make a hue and cry.

- Nagoor Ali

● CMRL already announced the Metro rail work well in advance, so it is the Kutchery Road shopkeepers' responsibility to plan and move elsewhere well in advance. Why cry foul now when work is to start? Such development has taken place in all city areas where Metro has come up.

When this rail project is fully developed,

the gain that comes from the rise in property value goes to the owners of spaces in this zone.

- Shiva

Missing bus stand

A temporary bus stand was set up a few days ago opposite SBI on Eldams Road in Teynampet as an alternative to regular stops for MTC buses coming from SIET College. This was for routes 12G, 45B, 12X, 12M and 12B. But within a week, the signboard went missing. Now no buses halt there. I request the MTC authorities to find a permanent solution to the temporary shelter on Eldams Road.

- Shanthi

Aavin card denied

I went to the Aavin office at C. P. Ramaswamy Road on November 30 to get my card for the next 15 days, beginning December 1. I had been out of town for two months. To my surprise, I was told that issuing a card for 15 days has been dispensed with. So I had to purchase the milk from outside, paying a higher rate.

When I went back, this time to buy a full month's card, I was told that only cardholders of November-December would be issued new cards. Now I'm forced to continue buying milk at a higher price for one more month. I do not understand the logic of denying cards to old cardholders by Aavin. Do Aavin officials have an explanation?

- K Vijayaraghavan

Traffic chaos in Mandavelli

For the past 15 days, traffic signals have not been functioning properly in Mandavelli.

During peak hours, this has a terrible impact on the movement of vehicles. Metro work is going on at the corner of ECB. I did not see any traffic policemen near BSS or the Mandavelli Bus Depot. Traffic police, please step in and restore some order here.

- A Girija

MY STORY



The Deaf can also make Music

By 'Ghatam'
SURESH VAIDHYANATHAN

I have been performing on stage for forty-five years now, as a percussionist. But not everybody may have noticed that I am also less-abled with a post-polio limp. My upbringing and hard work ensured me a motivated growth defying social denials and my musical ability had considerably buried my disability in the society's eyes by now. Alongside my progress, there have been moments when I have thought about how music is denied to the deaf and I wondered if there were ways in which this community could feel music and make it too. A fantasy was born and all through the COVID period, I was envisioning to make it a reality.

As an Advisory Board member, when I shared my dream with India Inclusion Foundation, a body working for inclusiveness of people with disabilities, its founder V. R. Ferose, writer and social reformer, assured to make my dream a reality.

In February this year, we identified the CSI School for the Deaf in San Thome, Chennai. Though initially unsure, the headmaster James Albert was very gratified

and gave us good support. I did a screening - just to see the response from the children since I wanted to create a band with as many as possible without elimination. Some were very excited, some curious and some were reluctant.

My first challenge was communication that needed a sign language. After the introduction and briefing of what I wanted to do, the teaching staff suggested, I develop the signs myself and not depend on the general system they follow. To my surprise, the magic worked. First I played some solos for them, displayed my social media videos, and asked them if they wanted to become a performer too. The reaction was exuberant and assuring cooperation.

We started with various percussion instruments I carried from home and later IIF bought a good number of percussion instruments I had suggested and donated to the school.

I initiated every student into some common beats using my fingers as sign. From one to nine the phrases got developed by every class. The biggest challenge was to keep them attentive. Strangely, the "movements" and not "noises" were distracting them. But as our relationship grew, they were more co-operative. Not a word spoken, yet the bonding went to the extent, from sharing their tea to showing concern for my swollen feet. Musically the challenges were to make them under-

stand the varying spaces between syllables and to make them play in tandem. Then, there were the variations in volume and tempo. But I could extract every rhythmic discipline from them with more fresh signs and my body language. A new harmony was evolving, "by the non-hearing for the hearing" and I feel proud in aptly naming this music "The Unheard"!

When Ruban, the Tamil teacher, who co-ordinated assembling the children told me that some of the children with better DCB level are into speech therapy, I wanted to try them to speak the rhythm and to my wonder, I could create a fresh composition in Konnakol that was learnt and presented with immense gusto.

When I tried the xylophones with a couple of students to attempt a melodic piece in an all-percussion band, Ruben Paul, eagerly wanting to participate, also learnt the song and supported us on the keyboard.

In early November, we took this band to Bangalore to premiere "The Unheard" music at the 10th India Inclusion summit and the performance was an outstanding one. With welled up eyes, the audience gave a standing ovation. Following that, on December 2, we got to perform at the opening ceremony of the SciArtsRus festival called 'Marghazhi Matram' held in Mylapore, where less-abled artistes get to perform on stage.

To my knowledge this initiative is a maiden one in our country and must be given the needed support to become a movement.

● 'Ghatam' Suresh Vaidyanathan is a senior musician, composer, band leader and researcher. Contact - ghatamsuresh@gmail.com



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Radha Swamy Centre of Excellence opens in Mandavelipakkam

Students of three Sivaswami group schools will make use of training in indoor sport, STEM learning, performing arts and more

By Our Edit Team

What was once a school on West Circular Road in Mandavelipakkam is now a 'centre for excellence'.

On December 6, Tamil Nadu governor R. N. Ravi formally opened the Radha Swamy Centre of Excellence. He opened a plaque to mark this milestone and was taken around the facility, where each floor is dedicated to an activity.

One floor for science learning, one for table tennis, carrom and chess, one for music and dance and arts, one for coaching in competitive exams and one space for learning Indian traditional games – all meant for the 3000 plus students who study at the three schools managed by the National Boys and Girls Education Society in Mylapore.

The schools being – Lady Sivaswami Ayyar Girls School. Sir Sivaswami Kalalaya Senior Sec School and Sivaswami Kalalaya Hr Sec. School.

Students of these schools, will in turns, be taken to this centre to attend classes though in some cases, the coaching will go on into late evening – in table tennis for example.

Says Srinivasan K Swamy, president of the society that manages these schools and who has funded the remake of this space and dedicated it to his mother, Radha Swamy, "Our schools offers music and dance and sports but we want our students to excel, to aim high and this is the place for it."



Monday's event was co-ordinated by the heads of the three schools and senior teachers. The society's committee members and the Swamy family members attended the launch event, held in the space meant for performing arts.

Society treasurer S. Sridharan and secretary Vatsala Narayanaswami were on the dais and spoke on this occasion. Student groups presented snappy choir music and dance pieces to wind up the day's event.

The Centre has partnered with Curio Kidz, Raman's TT Centre and Kreedha besides others in curating the programmes that will run here soon.

Mandala pooja of Ayyappa Bhaktha Samajam

After a gap of two years due to the pandemic, the 62nd annual mandala pooja of Ayyappa Bhaktha Samajam is being conducted jointly with Kalyana Nagar Association from Dec. 21 to 27. Several special poojas, homams and concerts have been arranged along with annadhanam on all days, says T. R. Prakash, treasurer, Ayyappa Bhaktha Samajam.

For further information, contact Prakash at 9444037204.

Free, online Tally course

Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home in collaboration with HCL Foundation is conducting free, online Tally Essential Comprehensive Training Certification Course.

The latest course will be launched on January 4 and run for 150 hours, on weekdays. Those who have completed their B. Com / BBA studies and MBA and CA freshers may find this course useful. Contact: 98840 28298 / 63837 67416.

Christmas carols in San Thome church

By Fabiola Jacob

The choir of CSI St. Thomas English Church will present its Christmas Carol service on Sunday, December 18 at 6 p.m.

Led by the choir director Anila Manoharan, the choir will sing a Christmas Cantata 'It took a miracle' by J W Peterson, arranged by Don Marsh. The hour-long programme will include Christmas carols, old and new.

Traditionally, the carol service here ends with the congregation joining in to sing 'Silent Night' in candlelight inside the 180-year-old church, followed by a campfire and celebration outside the church.

Reunion of Class '97 of St. John's School

The Reunion of Class '97, the alumni of St. John's Senior Secondary School, is to be held on Dec 17, 10 am to 6 p.m. The venue is The Park Hotel, Nungambakkam.

The agenda: Get-together, honouring teachers, connect with friends online and an entertainment session.

The school's principal and teachers are expected to participate, in groups.

Contact info of co-ordinators: Mohammed Saleem - +65 9338 3617, Arun Kumar P. - 97690 64046, Swati - 99805 51227

Contests in Kolam, Rangoli, Cookery and Pallankuzhi

By Our Edit Team

The 2023 edition of Sundaram Finance Mylapore Festival (Jan. 5 to 8) will offer contests in Kolam and in Rangoli on the weekend of Jan. 7 and 8. The contests will be held simultaneously on North Mada Street, 3.30 pm onwards. Registration can be done from 3 pm at the spot.

About 80 slots for kolam and 25 slots of Rangoli are to be made.

While only pulli kolam is allowed for this contest, the theme for Rangoli is Pongal.

There is to be a Cookery Contest, to be held on the weekend. Two themes - Rasam and Chutneys. Dates and the venue will be made known online next week. Limited registration. Contests in pallankuzhi and dayakattam, for adults and children, will also be held on the weekend.

For children, there is a chess tourney, two crafts workshops and a Temple Tour.

The main stage shows of nagaswaram, dance, drama, music and folk arts will be held in Sannidhi Street.

More info will be posted at - <https://www.facebook.com/mylaporefestival> and at www.mylaporefestival.in



January 5 - 8, 2023



The Women Fellowship members of CSI Good Shepherd Church in Alwarpet had a Christmas get together on December 11 in the parish hall of the church. The programme commenced with a prayer by Iyeramma and the group's president, Nilopher Earnest. A pattimandram was conducted for the members. Later, Pastor Rev. Earnest Selva Durai delivered a message. There were skits, songs, dance and a quiz programme too. The programme wound up with a prayer by convenor Sutharani Davidraj and lunch. All the members wore a green colour saree for the event.

- Reported by Juliana Sridhar



Teen residents of Ragamalika Apartments celebrate Muthuswamy Dikshitar's life in campus play

Children at Ragamalika Apartments in Mandaveli recently staged a unique arts programme. A show dedicated to famed Carnatic music composer Muthuswamy Dikshitar.

The play was titled, 'Fort St. George'il Muthuswamy Dikshitar' and the community here watched it intently.

This play was the effort that followed weeks of rehearsing - some 50 children of Ragamalika were the artistes and they even chose costumes to star in the play. A play which made Dikshitar known to those, especially the young, who knew little about him. It was the play that indicated that the song - Shyamale Meenkashi - a popular song of Carnatic music was inspired by the English song, Twinkle Twinkle Little Stars.

The story of this play started in Thanjavur and transitioned to the present day; the children sang songs composed by Muthuswamy Dikshitar.

"I simply loved the play," says Vairali Balaji, one of the actors. "And my favourite part was where they explained how musicians get their inspiration from other songs."

Some children danced the Galopede, a famous dance from Ireland, others sang the British national anthem.

The director of the play, Hetal Somasundaram, said that she was inspired by a musical album called Vis-maya. Along with, Harini Ramesh, Sumanapriya Bharadwaj and Kalyani Muralidharan, the team worked with the young actors

for two months to put the play together. Madhu Iyer, another resident, was also a contributor to this production. The residents chipped in to donate for the expenses for lighting, sound and stage.

- Report by Yashini Venkat, student of Chettinad Hari Shree Vidyalayam, and resident of Ragamalika Apartments.

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• **FLAT** for sale, 2 BHK with road side facing, balcony at South Chittrakulam Street, Mylapore. 750 sqft, For 65 Lakhs (negotiable), UDS 226sqft (Second floor), 16 years old building with interior work. Contact: 9941 350222.

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- MYLAPORE, Appu St, brand new, ground floor, 3 BHK, Rs. 25000. 1 BHK, Rs. 11000, 12000. 2 BHK, Rs. 14000. Agent: 9445156540
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Nostalgia swirls as violinists Ganesh and Kumaresh present gala show to mark 50 years of performing

By Our Edit Team

Violinists and brothers, Ganesh and Kumaresh celebrated their 50 years of performing on stage and around it at a gala event held at Narada Gana Sabha, Alwarpet a fortnight ago, to a packed audience.

The well-curated event, anchored by Subashree Thanikachalam, packed a string of performances by the brothers, accompanied by their favourite, long-standing artiste colleagues.

The screening of video and photos snippets of the duo's journey created a nostalgic feeling.

One moment of re-wound memory that made the screening memorable was the projection of pictures of the duo's first concert in Madras, which was held at Srinivasa Sastri Hall, Luz; when the two brothers were just pre-teens and the famed vocalist M. L. Vasanthakumari was a special guest.

"MLV amma had said she would spend a few minutes at this concert but she stayed on longer to listen to Ganesh and Kumaresh," recounted Subashree, as the audience that evening were glued to the visuals on the big screen.

YOUR MEMORIES OF SASTRI HALL CONCERTS: share anecdotes at - mytimesedit@gmail.com



Carnatic music at margazhi time in holy space lit with oil lamps

By Our Edit Team

This is a music fest, curated by VVS Foundation India, VVS Foundation USA, and SaMaa Arts LLC, USA.

The first festival – Ekaantha Sangeetha Seva – begins on the first day of the Margazhi, December 16, at Srikara Anjaneya Raghavendra Temple, near R R Sabha, Mylapore where every morning, from 6.00 am to 7.30 am all days, artistes will perform.

The concerts are on until January 14, 2023.

The musicians perform in front of the sannithanam (sanctum sanctorum) of Sri Raghavendra Swami, without artificial lights and amplification; the space is lit with oil earthen lamps. Leading artistes perform here and the space is open to rasikas too.

The second festival is Swagatham; this the host says, provides a platform and opportunity for fresh, upcoming artistes of the Carnatic music world.

This festival is from Dec. 16 to January 14, 2023 at Srikara Anjaneya Raghavendra Temple, near RR Sabha, Mylapore. Concerts are held in the evening and through the day on weekends.

One more festival is for the mangala vadyams of South India, the nadaswaram and thavil.

It features talented young musicians of nadaswaram & thavil. This festival will be held at the Arulmigu Vellishwaran Temple, South Mada Street, Mylapore. The ten-day festival begins on December 20.

And the festival titled Naadhaarpanam is on at Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple. It will be held for two days: December 22 & 23.

The host says that Naadhaarpanam "is a unique concept where talented youngsters across the world are hand picked and teamed up with veteran and seasoned musicians of India on a platform."

You can visit the Facebook page of SaMaa Arts LLC for details.

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Tamil Nadu governor R. N. Ravi formally launched the December Season music and dance festival of Brahma Gana Sabha at the R. R. Sabha hall in Mylapore last week.

Though the guests in that big auditorium were small in number, on an evening when a cyclone was expected, the formal awards event was neat and simple.

S. Sowmya, senior vocalist, Krishakumari Narendran, Bharatanatyam guru, stage actor V. Chandrasekaran and 92-year-old nagaswaram artiste Chinnathambi Pillai were decorated with the Padmam awards.

Arts promoter and president of the sabha, Nalli Kuppusami Chetti and his team hosted the formal event. Later, Sowmya presented a vocal concert.

Brahma Gana Sabha will be hosting concerts in turns, at five venues this season.



Church group distributes foodstuff to flood-affected

Cyclone Mandous hit Chennai a few days ago and many poor people in Srinivasapuram, located off Pattinapakkam, were affected as water entered many houses.

Vincent de Paul Society members attached to Our Lady of Guidance Church led by its president Previn Vincent, visited these families last week and distributed 100 loaves

of bread and biscuit packets to them.

- Report by Juliana Sridhar



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