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THYAGARAJA ARADHANA: AT THREE VENUES

Thyagaraja aradhana is to be held at various venues in Mylapore to remember the saint and Carnatic music composer, Thyagaraja on his mukti day.

Here are three places where events are happening -

1. **Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan**, Chennai Kendra is organising an event that is a tribute to saint Thyagaraja on Saturday, January 18 (Bahula Panchami & 178th aradhana day) at its main auditorium at East Mada Street, Mylapore.

This event starts at 10.30 am: "Tribute to Saint Thyagaraja" is the themed concert by Dr. Prameela Gurumurthy and her group of artistes.

At 12.30 pm: prasadam distribution. All are welcome to participate.

2. A unique Thyagaraja aradhana is held in a small street house of Mylapore.

At No.12, Mathala Narayanan Street, off North Mada Street.

This year, the aradhana will be held on January 18, 4.30 p.m. onwards.

This event is held in a small drawing room, where the sacred space also has a visual of Thyagaraja, where a small group of people - gurus, artistes and students - sit and sing the famed pancharatna kritis of Thyagaraja.

The group is led by guru Yogam Santhanam and her students, by the son of late flautist maestro Dr. N. Ramani, Thyagarajan and by



Rajaraman, a sishya of T. N. Seshagopalan.

Solo singing follows the gosti singing and finally, prasadam is shared. Rasikas are invited to the venue but will have to make do with limited space.

The contacts - N. Chandramouli - 24613226 and N. Vaidyanathan - 9444627421

3. **The Thiagaraja Sangeeth Vidwath Samaj, Mylapore** is holding the aradhana fest from Jan 17 to 26. The gosti singing of Thyagaraja's pancharatna kritis is on Jan.18, 10.30 am. From Jan.19 to 25, 6 to 8 pm, artistes will take turns to sing for about ten minutes.

On Jan.26, at 7pm, is the aradhana mahotsavam finale: artistes and rasikas will go out in procession through the streets around the Samajam premises carrying the portrait of saint Thyagaraja.

The Samajam is near Sri Madhava Perumal Temple.

THIS QUIZ IS FOR ALL

The Quiz Foundation of India (QFI) is hosting a quiz this weekend called 'QFI Unusual Suspects' where bigtime quizzers who bag all the prizes at the QFI's annual quizzes and other city quiz events step aside and encourage others to take a shot at the final and win some prizes. The quizmaster is Dr. Navin Jayakumar.

Teams of three can take part. On Jan.25. Prelims at 9.30 am; finals at 11.30 am.

At Kaviko Centre, CIT Colony, Mylapore.

The event is supported by Zifo.

OPEN QUIZ. ON JAN. 26. IN R. A. PURAM

The Republic Day Quiz is an open quiz to be held on January 26, 2 pm onwards at the T N Rajaratnam Kalai Arangham in R A Puram (near the Adyar river bridge, west side).

Teams of three can take part and the quiz covers the A to Z of everything. Individual registrations are accepted as well, and you can team up with fellow quizzers at the venue. Prizes worth Rs.50,000 are up for grabs. There are goodies for the best school and college teams.

Here is the registration link

- <https://latentviewanalytics.com/republic-day-quiz/>

The quiz is supported by Latent View and curated by Scolympics.



DANCE FEST

Parvathi Ravi Ghantasala's dance school, Kala Pradarshini is hosting its 27th annual dance festival from Jan 17 to 19 at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mylapore.

There are dance recitals every evening.

Report local community events / share pictures -
mytimesedit@gmail.com

MYLAPORE TIMES

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State govt. plans new granite temple for Valluvar in place of old

By Our Edit Team

The Tamil Nadu government has allotted Rs.19 crores to build a new temple dedicated to saint Thiruvalluvar in Mylapore.

File photo



It will replace the brick and mortar temple that exists today.

Chief minister M. K. Stalin is expected to lay the foundation stone for the project soon. New shrines for Valluvar and his wife, Vasuki are to be built.

A well-known sthapati is to be assigned for the project which proposes a single, elevated structure and designed in a manner that highlights the architectural design of a chariot pulled by elephants.

Other plans include a shrine for Valluvar's parents and a large pond with statues of Avvaiyar and Sangam-era greats placed on its banks.

It is believed that the poet-philosopher Valluvar was born under a *illupai* tree at a spot where the temple now stands, in an inner street of Mylapore, off Nattu Subbaraya Street and at the north end of Sri Mundagakanni Amman Temple.

Feast of saint Lazarus is on at church in R. A. Puram

By Juliana Sridhar



The annual feast of saint Lazarus is being celebrated at Our Lady of Guidance Church in R. A. Puram from January 16 to 26. Lazarus is the community's patron saint. This is the 443rd edition of the feast.

The feast commenced with the flag hoisting on January 16 evening.

From January 17 to 24, Holy Mass will be held at 6 am and novena Mass at 6.15 pm.

On January 25, the Mass is at 6.15 pm and a grand car procession of nine statues of saints including that of Mother Mary will be taken out. This procession generally ends at midnight.

On January 26, there will be four Masses.

Parish priest Fr. T. Anthony Raj and his assistant, Fr. L. Anto Jenish has planned the Masses and novenas and the community executes the celebration which has a colourful heritage.

Unique exhibit of Srimad Bhagavatam

The Srimad Bhagavatam engraved on glittering gold-plated copper sheets and designed in the format of a book. This unique creation will be on show at Giri Trading store in Mylapore (near Sri Kapali Temple) - before its permanent installation at Mathura later this month.

This exhibit is open to people on January 18 and 19, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. For details call Thamizhamuthu Pari at 8838637258.

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VINCENT'S JOTTINGS

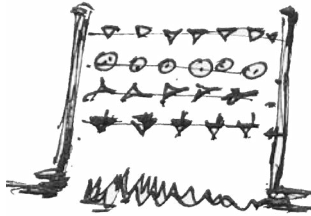
By VINCENT D' SOUZA

At the close of Day Three of the annual Mylapore Festival (wholly funded by Sundaram Finance), I took a deep breath. The weekend are long days; starting with the kolam, the cookery and the dayakattam contests at three different venues.

And you then have to prepare the ground for another long day.

Sundays are the longest because often, the Walks start around 6.30 a.m. as we try to beat the noise of the traffic and let participants free to enjoy a relaxed breakfast at their favourite place.

So back to the end of Day Three: we say bye to our team of workers, aides and volunteers and my colleague and I walk down one of the inner streets to the hotel where we reside. Here, food hawkers are slowly shutting down their hawker stalls and I spot a young woman with what looks like a sports kit bag slung across her back.



She doubles her way to the main road. The bag's design and size makes me curious. 'This looks like a cricket kit bag...', I suggest to the woman. She smiles.

'It is packed with ear rings and stuff,' she tells me.

She is from Kotturpuram. And she is here to sell trinkets at the Festival. Like dozens of others.

Over the past decade (the festival has completed its 21st edition), the Mylapore Festival has encompassed lots of people of the kind who find such street melas just the place to sell their stuff - bangles and ear-rings, scarves and hair-clips, eco-food-stuff and toys and games, bags and shawls and lots more.

They come from all corners and from afar too. From Tiruvallur and Tambaram, from Saidapet and Mint and beyond; they find some space in the inner streets around Sri Kapali Temple and hawk.

These people also make the festival what it has come to be. A people's festival where everybody is welcome and everybody does what they enjoy on an evening out; watch a puppet show, take selfies, buy some ear-rings, sip some coffee, pick up some *keerai* and pack some chappatis for people at home.

These are the people who complete the festival; while we curate the key events, some 40-plus, held across four days on the eve of the Pongal festival.

On the night we wrapped up the 2025 edition and it drizzled in the dew, and I walked back to my hotel, one well-wisher came up and said - 'Many, many hawkers must be glad they can go home and have a nice Pongal.'

Those words remain with me.

LETTERS FROM READERS

E-MAIL your letters to - mytimesedit@gmail.com.
Provide full name and short address.

This column also contains comments posted on our social media pages.

Kolam Contest: my experience over 20 years

My heartfelt gratitude to the Mylapore Festival team; for the team behind the Kolam Contest for providing a wonderful platform to hone my kolam designing skills. I have been an active participant in this contest for nearly two decades.

Being new to Chennai at that time, it was my mother-in-law, a longtime resident of Mandavelipakkam, who introduced me to the event. I vividly remember my first contest in 2005, held in front of what is now Sukra Jewellers on North Mada Street. Back then, my experience with kolams was limited to drawing simple patterns in the puja room as part of a daily ritual, often repeating the same designs.

The scene at the contest was both overwhelming and inspiring. The large turnout of participants, armed with chalk pieces, water bottles, brooms, waste cloths, and kolam powder, left me feeling out of place. Standing there with nothing in hand, I was ready to back out. Nervously, I managed to create a basic 13-pullu ther kolam and was relieved just to complete it without missing a dot.

That first contest marked the beginning of my journey as a kolam artist. Over the years, I began scouting for designs during my leisure time, carefully saving them for future



contests. Today, 20 years later, I feel more confident in my skills, experimenting with different styles and incorporating elements from other art forms into my kolams.

This contest serves as a vibrant cultural platform where artists can meet, showcase their work, and exchange ideas. The excitement is palpable. Kudos to Vincent D' Souza and his team for their tireless and selfless efforts in promoting kolam artistry.

- Kamakshi Ashok

Squirrel's role

It was a fantastic four-day Mylapore Festival; I enjoyed the invitation to contribute to the festival backroom work in a small way - like the squirrel in the mega event - and be able to participate as a visitor, in a number of events. Well planned and organised with apt tinkering as per the situation on the streets.

- Ganga Sridhar

Great Heritage Walk.

By Dr Chithra

I was part of a Mylapore Temples heritage walk led by Dr. Chitra Madhavan on Sunday morning.

It was fantastic.

We also appreciated the puppet show organised in our residential complex in Venus Colony as part of Mylapore Festival. Our thanks to the organisers.

- Bharath Ramani

MYLAPORE REWIND

This column carries excerpts from Mylapore Times, 1995 onwards. This week, we focus on March 1995

● Golden jubilee Reunion: P S High School's 1945 batch (Mar 11-17, 1995)

By R. Meera

Fifty-three alumni members from the 1945 batch of P S High School came together to celebrate their Golden Jubilee reunion year on March 5, the annual day of the P S Educational Trust. N. C. Parthasarathy, the convenor of the event, gave a cheque for Rs. 60,000 to the school on behalf of the members. The 'boys' managed to trace three of their teachers, one of whom, Srinivasa Iyengar, attended the programme.

● Monkeys make merry in R A Puram (Mar 11-17, 1995)

Simians are making life miserable for the residents of R A Puram's 4th Main Road, especially those living in houses 16, 17A and 17B.

The residents said that the monkeys were running away with clothes and utensils. One even bit a cook who had come to work at a house. After several futile attempts at nabbing them, the residents

approached the office of Mylapore Times, which got in touch with the Forest Department's office in Gandhi Nagar.

● Auto drivers in San Thome break a promise (Mar 4-10, 1995)

A few months ago, auto drivers attached to the stand at the northern end of San Thome High Road had taken a pledge not to overcharge passengers. This was done at a Rotary Club function, in the presence of the deputy commissioner of traffic police. They even put up a copy of the pledge at the auto stand. However, a few days ago, their resolve seemed to have weakened and it was back to the fleecing exercise, a passenger complained.

1945 batch of P S High School at Reunion in 1999



● Nadu Street student gets prestigious award (Mar 4-10, 1995)

Resident of Nadu Street and third-year computer science student at Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering, M. Dhananjai, has been chosen for the Dreicher Panniker Award 1993-'94. Son of M. Madhava Rao, Dhananjai developed a database system for a French multinational company, PSI-Bull.

● Consumer Court Bar Association opens office (Mar 11-17, 1995)

The Madras Consumer Court Bar Association opened an office in the Slum Clearance Building located on R K Mutt Road. Activist lawyer Sriram Punju is the president of the Association, which soon plans to open an Aid Clinic offering free services.

● StanChart's Priority Banking centre (Mar 11-17, 1995)

The refurbished building of Standard Chartered Bank at 40, Royapettah High Road, has now become the bank's Priority Banking Centre. The centre is a "one-stop service" for its high net-worth clients.

● This column is curated by Kanaka Cadambi.

Rice, dhal, atta and more. Prices less than at local stores. Mobile store: central govt. scheme

By Baskar Seshadri

Want to buy rice or dhal or atta at rates that are lesser than those at local stores? Look for this van that offers you good stuff and at rates that are a deal. The van is part of a service offered by the National Co-operative Consumers Federation



of India (NCCP) which functions under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India. The NCCP has been arranging mobile sales of provisions in all the major areas at rates much lower than the MRP rates in local private stores. These vans are positioned in strategic locations of Important places in the city.

In Mylapore, the NCCP mobile van is parked on East Mada Street near Kalathi rosemilk shop everyday, 10 a.m. onwards till 5 p.m. It offers rice (Rs 34 per kg), dhal (Rs 70 per kg), konda kadalai for Rs 58 per kg and atta for Rs 30 per kg besides other stuff. Payment can be made via GPay too. The office of NCCF is in Thousand Lights and the contact person is Deepak. He can be reached on 8610 33 50 74.



Mylapore poppadom

By Our Edit Team

The Hindu Lit for Life, The Hindu's annual literature festival will be held on January 18 and 19 at multiple venues in Chennai.

One associate event features multi-faceted artists at an exhibition.

And one of the artists is Frenchwoman Chantal Jumel, for whom Mylapore is a second home, for she spends 5 to 8 weeks in the heart of Mylapore, working out of her base near Sri Kapali Temple and touring India and walking down Mylapore's lanes and streets.

Chantal's work is to be featured at the Lit Fest's Imprint: The Paper and Book Project, curated by Sharan Apparao and Shijo Jacob, which looks at the connections between art and literature.

Chantal said she spent the past four weeks, just before she flew into Chennai to work on a cute work; a work she themed on Mylapore and her experiences here.

On a set of a dozen art paper sheets, cut in the shape of what she playfully calls small poppadoms, Chantal employs her technique of puncturing the paper with sharp little holes that form the outline of her images - and in this little booklet the images are kolam, temple ther, flowers and so on.

The two-day festival will be held at Sir Mutha Concert Hall, The Hindu Pavilion, and The Annex (Lady Andal School premises) in Chennai.

The exhibition then moves to a city gallery.



Chantal

Lady Sivaswami Ayyar Girls' School: Alumni Reunion on Jan.26

Special call goes out to students of 1975 and 2000 batches

By Our Edit Team

Lady Sivaswami Ayyar Girls' Higher Secondary School, Mylapore is hosting its annual Alumni Reunion Day on January 26, 9.30 am onwards.

This year, the alumni leaders will welcome members of the 1975 batch which completes its 50 years since passing out and members of the 2000 batch who complete 25 years since they passed out.

K. Revathy, a teacher at the school managing alumni issues, says that the team is making all efforts to locate members of the



1975 batch; this far, 10 members have been connected.

"We don't have their updated records and so locating each one of them is taking time," said Revathy. The batch consisted of over 100 students.

Starting the Reunion event with a prayer and formal event, there will be some fun and light moments too.

Teachers and school staff retiring this year will be honoured. The meet ends with lunch.

The contacts at the school are - K. Revathy / 9841624553 and P. Selvapriya / 9884841979

Residential workshop for young musicians

Nadasangamam, the music wing of Narada Gana Sabha Trust is organising the annual residential workshop for young music students / musicians in early February (7th to 9th) at Thennangur, 110 km away from Chennai.

Dr. R. S.Jayalakshmi is the convenor of the camp. Eminent musicians, scholars and experts will be the resource persons.

There will be teaching/ learning sessions, talks and interactive sessions. Registration forms are available at Narada Gana Sabha office in Alwarpet.

Ph: 24993201/24990850. ngsabha@gmail.com.

TALK ON JAN.18: SECRET LIFE AFTER DEATH

'Secret Life After Death': this is the topic that speaker T. S. Viswanathan will speak on, at Kalyan Nagar Association premises, Mandavelipakkam.

On Jan.18, 6.30 p.m. onwards.

The speaker is an expert in scientific philosophy and has lectured in India and abroad.

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SUNDARAM FINANCE MYLAPORE FESTIVAL 2025

MANY SIDES OF THE FEST

1. Teens went on a Cycle Tour, exploring places they may not have seen or known well. Chitrakulam, Mylapore police station, Buckingham Canal, Val-luvar Temple and Rayar's Cafe among others. Led by Ramanuja Moulana and Cycling Yogis' support.

women members ran their sales.

8. Pallankuzhi contest in session

9. The thinnai school set erected along the Kapali Temple theradi, marked the contribution of Mylaporean 'Dadi Vadiyar', to school education

10. The illuminated Kolam arch was a selfie zone

2 & 3. Scenes from the play 'Sangita Payithyam' by Shradha Theatres.

4. Pralayan's Tamil play centred on hassles people face at police stations and how officers and men in khaki, in implementing laws rightly, can be helpful.

5 & 6. Scenes from the Kolam, Rangoli contests

7. The Bazaar; shops along temple tank. Where SHG





1

SUNDARAM FINANCE MYLAPORE FESTIVAL 2025 FESTIVAL SNAPSHOTS

1. Youth members of Madras MBS Choir on stage

2. Lots of teens took part in contests in traditional game

3. Dr. Chithra Madhavan's heritage Walk focussed on three Mylapore temples

4. Vinitha Siddharta took a group around

Sri Kapali Temple to show them traditional games designed on floor stones here. And let the guests enjoy some game time.

5. Students of Sri Kanyaka Parameswari College, George Town presented a medley of North Indian dances



2



4



5



3



6

6. Students of Queen Mary's College, Mylapore presented a medley of folk dances

HOW TO ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES



Zoology students at Queen Mary's College study and buy plants that can do this

By Our Edit Team

Butterflies are fascinating insects that play a major role in the ecosystem. They are significant bioindicators and flagship species.

How do you draw butterflies to your garden?

One of the topics that a batch of stu-



dents of Queen Mary's College, Mylapore discussed recently.

As part of Wildlife Week celebrations, the department of zoology, Queen Mary's College, organized a sale of plants which attract butterflies. This event was held in October 2024.

Students were briefed on the plans and then allowed to buy some saplings that could attract butterflies.

Prof. E. Malathi, HoD said that the objective of this event was to encourage students to establish a garden that could attract butterflies.

She says, "The garden need not be a huge space. It could even be a single sapling that could attract butterflies."

Butterflies require both host and nectarine plants. By growing a host plants, students learn to study different species of butterflies that are attracted to these plants to complete their life cycle.

Butterflies are attracted towards vibrant colours.

Nectarine plants such as Ixora, Asters, Hibiscus, Premna, Croton, Nilavembu, Blue bell, Champak, Sweetbasil, Keshavardani and host plants such as curry leaves, lemon, bael, Pongamia, bamboo, false Ashoka, Kalonchi, Petunia, Passion flower, mango, Nerium, Palm, Golden shower tree and Guava were sold.

This was a novel initiative on the QMC campus.

FROM USA TO MYLAPORE. TO MASTER MUSIC. AND CARRY ON A MAESTRO'S LEGACY

Vidarshanaa Anand is 13. And is the great granddaughter of flute maestro late Dr. N. Ramani

By Preetha K.

Young talent also find a stage in sabha and private concert halls during the famed December Season. And though the audience may be small - family and friends mostly - their talent is there to see. And some of them move up in the concert circuit.

There are teens who move to the heart of Mylapore, from USA or elsewhere, to learn music locally. And when they reach a level, what to perform on stage.

Vidarshanaa Anand is one such young talent, with a lineage that she and her family is proud of.

This flautist will be performing at Lakshmi Giri Convention Hall, North Mada Street, Mylapore on January 11.

This 13-year-old is the great granddaughter of flute maestro late Dr. N. Ramani.

Vidarshanaa's mother, Shanthi Murali and father, Anand Rajaram, are scientists in the US. The family moved to Mylapore so that the girl immersed in music.

"Vidarshanaa's love for the flute and for Carnatic music was a major driving reason for our relocation to Chennai in 2023. We also wanted our girls to learn our culture and tradition. Vidarshanaa showed deep interest in Carnatic music and rhythm ever since she was a toddler," says Shanthi, whose mother, Latha is Dr Ramani's daughter.

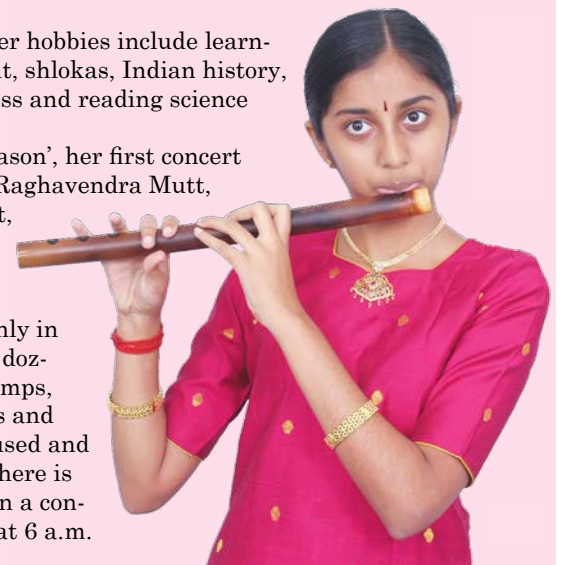
Vidarshanaa tells us over phone that her classes in flute started at the age of five when her great grandfather, Dr Ramani, taught her the basic lessons during a brief India trip.

"I continue my learning from Dr Ramani's student, B Gokula Krishnan. I am fascinated with the techniques and nuances of flute playing and I love attending flute concerts from all schools of music," she says. To understand the contrast between Indian and western styles of flute playing, she is also learning Western C flute from Seetha Shivaswamy in Austin, Texas. Though she is currently living in Chennai, she has enrolled in an online school in the US. Vidarshanaa has been learning Odissi classical dance for the last seven years from Aparupa Chatterjee in the US.

Her other hobbies include learning Sanskrit, shlokas, Indian history, playing chess and reading science fiction.

This 'season', her first concert was at Sri Raghavendra Mutt, Salai Street, Mylapore.

A sacred space that is bathed only in the light of dozens of oil lamps, no speakers and mikes are used and the atmosphere is serene when a concert starts at 6 a.m.



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PONGAL SNAPSHOTS

By Our Edit Team

Community Pongal celebrations in the Mylapore zone are a thing of the past. Even the number of people drawing kolams on thresholds during the margazhi season has reduced.

Overnight rain on Pongal eve had rendered the inner streets of Mandavelipakkam wet and so people who often draw large Rangolis for the occasion, were discouraged.

But there was a zing on the Chidambaraswamy Streets, a zone that lies off



Royapettah High Road, opposite the Anjaneya Temple.

Some families, dressed for the occasion, cooked pongal in pots in the open, celebrated festival traditions and enjoyed themselves. Quite a nice sight in a part of Mylapore which is chaotic on weekdays.

People came out in areas like R. A. Puram and in Mylapore to have small, common functions. Residents



of the TN Urban Development Habitat Board's newly-built blocks in Valeeswarar Thotam, R. K. Nagar witnessed families participating in kolam design, musical chair and carrom and volley-

ball games.

At St Thomas Cathedral in San Thome, the priests here led the community in symbolically cooking pongal and sharing it with church-goers even as a kolam/Rangoli contest was going on.

At the church in Luz, the youth group and parish council led the event. Pongal and sugarcane were shared and fun games like 'uri adi' held. Similar celebrations were held at the churches in Abiramapuram and on Lazarus Church Road.

On Kannum Pongal evening, families headed to the beach sands off Marina Loop Road; kids built sand castles and went on horse rides, families competed in tug-of-war challenges and others enjoyed a picnic tiffin. The seashore was barricaded.

- Inputs by Juliana Sridhar

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THE FUNDAS ON KOLAMS

AN INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS PRODUCES POSITIVE RESPONSES. THIS WAS A MYLAPORE FESTIVAL EVENT

By Our Edit Team

What is the connect between margazhi, bhajans, kolams and Andal?

Stories underlying such themes made for the informal workshop offered to children and their parents on the final day of the Sundaram Finance Mylapore Festival.

The 75-minutes interactive workshop was held inside a school campus off Sundareswarar Street and effected by the Fabulous Fundigais team .

The story of Andal - her descent to earth, her Thiruppavai, and her love and devotion—kept everyone captivated. Connecting kolams to Andal's Nachiyar Thirumozhi, where she decorates the entire street with kolams to welcome her beloved, was a story the children enjoyed.

How are kolams more than a decorative art? What is the science behind the designs?

What is the positive impact on health and the environment?

moment was when parents shared copies of the kolams their children had designed in the days following this workshop, inspired by the session.

The Fabulous Fundigais team was led by storyteller Ambujavalli Nagarajan and children's yoga and life-skills trainer Ahila Subramanian.

Questions and answers to them were raised and illustrated.

The children learnt the basics of drawing kolams and were encouraged to create their own designs on the spot.

The most fulfilling



GCC teams clear solid waste in colonies. Alert civic body if your area needs attention

By Baskar Seshadri

Greater Chennai Corporation is executing a massive drive to clear solid waste which is lying around in public spaces in all zones of the city.

As part of this drive, the GCC team for Teynampet zone were seen in action in Mylapore – the men cleared the debris of construction waste in Solaiappan Street in Mylapore which falls under the Division 124 .

If there are mounds of such waste in streets / roads in your GCC ward, alert GCC via Twitter or social media pages of GCC. Or call its helpline.

The drive is on for 2 / 3 weeks.

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