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YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWSPAPER

Vol. 28, No. 49

Mar 2 - 8, 2024

12 pages Free Circulation

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35 children enjoyed the two art / craft workshops that were held at Nageswara Rao Park on Sunday, Feb.25 as part of the annual Art Fest – Chennai event. Both were conducted by artist, art teacher and social activist Shreya Suraj of Gopalapuram.

The morning's event got children to convert used T-shirts into handy cloth bags. The evening's workshop was focussed on eco-friendly Decoupage.

WATCH VIDEOS of Art Fest 2024 - at www.youtube.com/mylaporetv

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NOOKS

LAUNDRY, DYER

Name of the shop: New Band Box Cleaners and Dyers
Address: 14, Chitrakulam West Street, Mylapore.
Owner: S. Kalasha
Phone: 9940586162
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New Band Box Cleaners and Dyers was started 13 years ago, after the original Band Box closeby was closed down.

Coats, pants, shirts, sarees and dhotis are washed at a premium processing central facility of the 65-year-old renowned Band Box launderers, starched, dried and are brought back to this shop where the clothes are pressed using a special technique.

Kalasha, the shop owner, says he worked in the original Band Box shop for 40 years.

Kalasha says he does not believe in dry cleaning. "Clothes need to be washed in water and water cannot harm any fabric. I think some chemicals are being added in water to retain colour and texture, in the name of dry cleaning," he says.

Washing a set of pants and coat will cost Rs. 450 and will take a week's time.

Darning and dyeing of garments and sarees are also done here. "But I rarely get such orders," he says.

Report by V. Soundararani

WATCH VIDEOS on Nooks -
www.youtube.com/mylaporetv

CHECK THIS

STORIES, MUSIC & DANCE ON CHIDAMBARAM

Aalap in association with Narada Gana Sabha is presenting a multi-art form production - Chidambara Rahasyam - An Ode to the Heart Space - by Bengaluru based story-teller Vinay Varanasi.

The narration is blended with classical rendition by vocalist Spoorthi Rao, Bharatnatyam by Varun, with musicians Sruti Sarathy on violin and Adamyia Ramanand on mridangam.

The production highlights the greatness and significance of Chidambaram, and the rahasyam itself.

On March 7 at Narada Gana Sabha. Starts 6.30 pm. Ticketed show. Book at www.mdnd.in

CELEBRATING KANNADASAN. MUSIC SHOW

'Kaviyarasu Kannadasan Thamizh Sangam' celebrates the verses/lyrics and songs of the famed writer-poet-lyricist Kannadasan at this musical at Narada Gana Sabha on March 4, 6 pm onwards. Kalaimamani awardee and feted music director Thayanban leads a music troupe on stage.

Open to all. Hosted by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Manram.



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Maha Shivaratri: programmes at temples, elsewhere

By Our Edit Team

There are to be four key pujas at Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple for Maha Shivaratri on March 8. The four kaala pooja will start at 11.30 p.m. There are pujas at 2 a.m., 3 a.m. and at 4 a.m. the next day.

At this temple, as per tradition here, abhisekam takes place for four deities – Kapaleeswarar, Karpagambal, Vinayakar and Singaravelar. Each of the sessions will end with a *deeparathanai*.

On March 8, once the temple opens in the morning, it will remain open through the day and night without a break till the *artha jama pooja* takes place the next morning at around 4 a.m.

The HR & CE department is also hosting religious-cultural events at its ground off P. S. High School, Mylapore. Drama, dances and concerts have been lined up through the night and up to dawn; open to all.

Similar pujas are scheduled at other temples in the Mylapore zone dedicated to lord Shiva. These include Sri Valeeswarar Temple, Sri Velleeswarar, Sri Karaneeswarar, Sri Malleeswarar Temple, Sri Virupakseeswarar and Sri Theerthakapaleeswarar Temple, north of Dr. R. K. Salai.

<< The Brahma Kumaris are organising a three-day event “Sivanum Naanum” from March 1 to 3. Siva dharisanam, Rajayoga Dhyanam exhibition and meditation experience are part of it. Venue: Sri Velleeswarar Thirumana Mandapam, T.S.V. Koil Street, Mylapore

<< Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mylapore hosts three events on March 8 evening. Starts with famed odhuvar B. Sargurunathan presenting ‘Thevara isai’ at 5 p.m., then a music concert by Ramesh Vinayakam and his team and finally, a concert themed ‘Sivashakthiyum Cinemavum’ curated by Subhasree Thanikachalam. 7.30 p.m onwards. Open to all.



SCHOOL ADMISSION: UPDATES

By Our Edit Team

<< Rani Meyyammai Girls Higher Sec. School, Mandaveli, is now open for admissions to classes 6 to 11. English and Tamil medium. Classrooms equipped with smartboards, a green environment and good sports facilities are provided. Application forms are available in the school office between 1.30 pm and 5.00 pm. Ph: 24937683

< Sir Sivaswami Kallaya Senior Secondary School, Mylapore - admission open for all classes except 10, 11 and 12. Admissions to class 11 will be after the Board exams. Interested parents can contact the school office for further details. Ph: 24641257. This school is affiliated to CBSE and has smart boards, stem robotics and creche facility, among others.

<< Admissions to all classes in Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School are closed.

<< Admissions to all classes in P. S. Senior Sec-

ondary School are closed.

■ Updates posted at www.mylaporetimes.com

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Programme

08.03.2024 Friday

5.00 pm to 6.00 pm	Visalur Ravi Siva Nama	Bajan
6.00 pm to 7.30 pm	Amrutha Venkatesh Bombay Madhavan Arjun Ganesh	Vocal Violin Mridangam
7.35 pm to 8.35 pm	Dr. Gayatri Kamakoti VSP Gayatri Sivani Neyveli Narayanan K V Gopalakrishnan	Vocal Violin Mridangam Kanjira
8.40 pm to 9.40 pm	Dr. Shertalai Rangantha Sharma B. V. Raghavendra Rao Papanasam R. Kumar	Vocal Violin Mridangam
9.45 pm to 10.45 pm	J. B. Keerthana Pakkala Ramadoss N. C. Bharadwaj	Vocal Violin Mridangam
10.50 pm to 11.50 pm	Dr. Thoppur B. Sairam V. L. Kumar Papanasam R. Kumar	Vocal Violin Mridangam
11.55 pm to 12.55 pm	Shruthi S. Bhat Shreelakshmi S. Bhat Kumbakonam Swaminathan	Vocal Violin Mridangam

09.03.2024 Saturday

1.00 am to 2.00 am	Emani Lalitha Krishna Vaidya Rajasekar	Veena Mridangam
2.05 am to 3.05 am	Santhosh Subramaniam S. Chandran Papanasam R. Kumar	Vocal Violin Mridangam
3.10 am to 4.10 am	Hamisini / Poornima Aravind C. V. Krishna Subramaniam Abhinav Kailasam	Vocal Violin Mridangam
4.15 am to 5.15 am	Mylai Sathgurunathan N. V. Babu Papanasam R. Kumar	Thirumurai Padalgal Harmonium Mridangam

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VINCENT's JOTTINGS

By VINCENT D' SOUZA

Big Daddies take time to relearn and then learn, after they unlearn.

And Chennai Metro is one of them.

Yes, it has learnt many lessons from its previous Metro projects. Those are good for its core work. But it has not learnt the most important lesson - how do you work with communities when projects are intense and affect lives of people.

And I say this after closely observing its record now for the past eight months in the greater Mylapore zone.

First; when a major project has to be rolled out and a vast neighbourhood is affected, the company must have a team of Community Liaison and Engagement / Communication officers. And this is set up only when a company really believes the community must be respected, as we, its projects. But Metro thinks otherwise.

I recall when *Mylapore Times* reported the early on-ground work and plans of the Metro, a staffer of Metro's contractor made it a point to share some useful news after he realised/ or was told that a local newspaper like ours was a good channel for communication. But that flow evaporated in weeks.

Recently, an officer who said he was handling / co-ordinating traffic issues, made contact after he read about our close coverage of meetings with local communities on Metro issues. He was willing to share info that was of use to people. That channel also evaporated. We did not want to bug officers who do not care.

This far, Metro has held 'chalta-hai' meetings for citizens. Perhaps for the record. Held because some activists pushed them. These have evaporated too.

Just analyse the abysmal pre-preparation on issues affecting the community. For this major project that will affect Mylapore for three / four years.

Traffic Police are just four men. They are asked to handle such a vast project's fallout in addition to routines. Poor souls. Tired, privately-hired marshals do the hard job.

Is Chennai Corporation in the picture? We have not seen it pro-active. With traffic diversions planned, GCC should have relaid all major streets / roads to take the big volumes over 3/4 years. We see only cement patches to smoothen potholes and pits. Pathetic.

Is MTC around? Not seen at the ground level.

Large-scale bus route changes made. Bus stop / bus route signages come up six weeks after diversions. But not bus shelters at temporary stops.

Mylapore Times pings the MTC's MD, messages its social media handles, seeking bare info that Mylaporeans can use. We receive standard, cold replies.

It seems to me that Mylapore has been taken for a ride even before the 'ho-ho' days of a better tomorrow of smart transport come about.

Suffer now, suffer for four years. All for great commuting for your children and grand-children.



LETTERS FROM READERS

E-MAIL your letters to - mytimesedit@gmail.com. Or WHATSAPP to: 8015005628.

Provide full name and short address.

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

Clearing Mada Street hawkers: serious action or for optics?

● Refer your online report on GCC clearing all hawkers on South Mada Street, Mylapore this past week. I went there in the evening and noticed that they had re-occupied the platform and business was on as usual.

- Kuppuswamy Sundaesan

● GCC ignores larger encroachments and haphazard parking and is more concerned about the people who sell vegetables and flowers to meet their daily needs.

- Sudharshan

● Everything is for optics - it is stage managed. Corruption and

bribing is deeply rooted.

- Varadarajan Krishnan

● There is no place to walk or drive on Mada Streets. From the footpath, the hawkers have come down onto the main road.

- Naina Punjabi



Metrowater supply reduced

Since last week Metrowater piped supply has been reduced. We are now compelled to buy water from private tankers. Seems the issue affects many areas. Complaints registered but there is no response.

- Venkat

Unclaimed cart

A cart has been parked at the entrance of the 2nd Link Street, CIT Colony, Mylapore for more than 6 months. No one has claimed it. GCC has been informed about this but there has been no response.

- Ganesh Murali

TANGEDCO does listen!

In the recent past, when a TANGEDCO person took the reading, they had charged Rs 8 per unit for the common connection.

I represented my case to the officials saying there is no lift and only 5 dwellings in the campus. This time, the reading was taken and only Rs 5.50 per unit has been charged.

- K. R. Jambunathan

M. K. Amman Koil Street needs attention

The power junction box near Med Plus, Mundakakanni Amman Koil Street, Mylapore was repaired after the Michang cyclone in December. The pit is now half-filled with rubbish. Also, there are two or three places where this street is battered and needs immediate attention.

- N. Mahadevan

Rayar Mess: Over-hyped

I do not find anything exceptional about the much-acclaimed menu of Rayar Mess. Is keeping the premises dull considered as preserving tradition? The taste of their idli, vada and pongal is the same as in any restaurant in the neighbourhood.

- Shanmugaperumal

MY STORY



Writing. Between auto savaris

By Va. PARAMASIVAN

I hail from Thirukkurgudi in Tirunelveli district. Home of the TVS family.

We are farmers.

I came to Madras in 1988 in search of work. And did some odd jobs. Then, in 1996, I began driving an auto. Today, I own an auto.

I got to know about farming when I used to accompany my father to the fields. I heard a lot of stories, exchanges and information and this stayed in my mind.

I have a flair for writing. And I was keen to tap into this skill.

pens in my auto.

My first book was themed on good driving skills and road/traffic regulations. More of an awareness kind of book. In Thamizh.

Then I began mulling on my second book. When I get breaks in auto driving in this city, ideas come by and I work on them and jot them down.

My second book is titled 'Oru Vivasayin Vidhai Viruchammana Kathai'. It is fiction. It has just come out. But it has lots of real life situations and

So whenever I got a break between rides or a client took a long break during a trip, I jotted down notes or wrote. I always carry paper, pad and

though I am not an active farmer, I have stored many stories of farmers and I wove a story based on these thoughts.

Writing in the manner I do isn't easy. It takes time. Much of the content for this book was written in my auto. It took me almost a year. I took a full day's break to complete the final chapter of this book.

The famed publisher Manimegalai Publications of Tamilvanan, now run by Ravi Tamilvanan, graciously accepted my manuscript and has published the book. And it is going around.

Running an auto today is a tough job. It is very competitive out there. Hard work pays and I am happy to earn enough to run my family.

Ideas keep coming by when I take my breaks. But I do not have a theme for my next book. Not yet.

● Va. Paramasivan is 53 years old and resides in KVB Gardens, R. A. Puram

Water supply issues: Metrowater says ‘normal’ flow by weekend

By Our Edit Team

Metrowater’s area engineers say that water supply is ‘being normalised’ in all areas in the greater Mylapore zone and normal supply will be achieved by Sunday.

They admit that larger water sourcing and supply issues did affect the area over the past fortnight and that supply is returning to normal times now.

The engineer for Unit 171 (R. K. Nagar / R. A. Puram) said that he has gone around the area Friday morning and seen the steady flow of water at residences and promises that supply will stabilise in two days.

The core of Mylapore was badly affected.



The engineer at the Alwarpet unit office confirms that water supply is stabilising now.

● Photo shows a private water lorry supplying water in R. K. Nagar this past week

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CHENNAI METRO

Grouting on in Mandaveli to address problems effected by underground boring

By Our Edit Team

Chennai Metro is undertaking some challenges that it has come across in boring underground in the south-east zone of R. A. Puram.



Boring is undertaken to lay the rail lines. Work began from its hub opposite Jesus Calls campus (what used to be a GCC playground) and has to cover the area under Tholkappia Poonga, T. P. Scheme Road and Raja Street zone in R. A. Puram.

But problems showed up when the work reached the T. P. Scheme Road, off R. K. Mutt Road. (Metro is said to have re-aligned the rail line to the east of R. K. Mutt Road based on its study of soil tests, etc).

In late December 2024, cracks appeared on a large office block on T. P. Scheme Road which houses some offices related to the state. When residents who got curious sought

to probe, they were not given access but a source showed them visuals of the cracks.

Later, Metro engineers revealed in private that Metro sought entry and work permit in that campus to follow-up on the development but couldn't succeed. Recently, Metro got access and grouting is on here. Grouting was also done in T. P. Scheme Road zone. (refer photo)

The grouting work by CMRL has spread and currently Raja Street is being covered. Workers are digging deep vents where cement is pumped in high pressure so as to strengthen the ground and fill air cavities in the earth.

Residents are unhappy that a newly-relaid tar road is being dug up in some areas. CMRL has confirmed that it will patch it all up after their work is completed, a local resident revealed.

Residents have been told that grouting strengthens the earth so that the tunnel boring machine can do its job safely and easily.

Old maps indicate that parts of this area was part of the Adyar river estuary. Obviously, the soil nature is different here.

Grouting may also have to be done inside private residences in this zone. Some residents are thwarting this without understanding the importance for the Metro project. Others wonder if their blocks will also suffer cracks.

Community leaders here say Metro engineers have been briefing people and seeking co-operation.

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MEMORIES OF LUZ



Sweeping work on Chennai Metro's rail projects in Luz, which will be the landmark for two underground stations, is changing the face of the area. A few of the landmarks that survived till now have closed down. In this series, we post the best memories people have had of Luz.

● Jayashree Arvind

Luz meant visiting Shanthi Vihar complex.

We frequented a greeting cards shop called Reflections. There was Kanya beauty parlour there. Blue Brothers Optical too.

There would be big queues at Vivek's store on Dec 31 evening for the New Year discount sales here.

Outing to T. Nagar would mean taking the buses 12B

● Vasantha V Madhu

There was no proper bus to Pondy Bazar from Mandaveli as 12A had limited frequency. Hence, from Mandaveli we would reach Luz, to get 12B or 12 bus.

45B was another bus to Saidapet that got us there fast (5B took a circuitous route). Pondy Bazar was for shopping. Luz was the bus hub for Mylaporeans.

● THIS SERIES will continue for some weeks. Want to share your story? Mail - mytimesedit@gmail.com

● GOT OLD LUZ PHOTOS SHOT AT STORES, RESTAURANTS HERE? Do share.



/ 12. Rex became the fashion hub. There was Vitan supermarket.

A visit to Alwar's old books shop was mandatory as was buying white canvas shoes at Bata's when the academic year began. Also mandatory, was buying Rani Muthu calendar from Nehru News Mart.

● K. R. Jambunathan

In front of Sukha Nivas, there was a bus stop for route number 12 buses. It was a concrete structure with slabs to sit.

The famous, old bookseller Alwar converted the whole bus stop into his shop! He even made almirahs with locks to store the books! When that bus stop was demolished he shifted to pavement space near Mylapore Club.

● Savya Ravi

The roadside stalls at Luz had the most fascinating accessories.

As a little girl, I remember saving up my pocket money to buy *jillala-billalas* - earrings, rubber bands, hair bands... To me that second-hand bookstall of Alwar had every single book ever printed.

There was a tiny Uncle's Ice-cream parlour that had the yummiest cone ice.

● Sushama

Ranganathan

The restaurant inside Shanti Vihar complex was also a very famous hub. Nallis, Crores and Crores, Lakhs and Lakhs were all important shops for all shoppers.

ஓம் நமசிவாய
திருவாரூர் மாவட்டம், நீடாமங்கலம் தாலுக்கா, ராயபுரம் கிராமத்தில் உள்ள 100 வருடங்களுக்கு முன்னர் நிர்மாணிக்கப்பட்ட **சிவாலயம்** புனரமைக்கப்பட்டு வரும் பங்குனி 22, வியாழக்கிழமை (4.4.2024) அன்று கும்பாபிஷேகம் நடைபெற உள்ளது. இக்கோவிலுக்கு பிரகார பாதை அமைப்பதற்கு கருங்கல் (2x2) மின்சார உபகரணங்கள் மற்றும் சில உட்கட்டமைப்பு வேலைகளுக்கு பொருட்கள் தேவைப்படுகிறது. பொருட்களாக மட்டும் உபயம் செய்ய விருப்பம் உள்ள ஆன்மிக அன்பர்கள் 6380275847 என்ற எண்ணை தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும்

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Platform for artists, in the open air

By Our Edit Team

It was a rather stuffy, hot day, the Sunday of February 25. The shade that the trees inside Nageswara Rao Park provided was a big relief to artists and visitors at the 2024 edition of Art Fest that was held in the park through the day.

87 artists, mostly of Chennai and some from across Tamil Nadu, exhibited their works, for people to see, admire, discuss and place orders.

Art Fest, a not-for-profit platform promoted by *Mylapore Times* newspaper and ideated by writer-artist Ganapathy Subramaniam, sets up a platform in public space for artists and invites people to the annual show.

There were works of all kinds – miniatures, drawings and illustrations, visuals of common elements and India’s landmarks, works made from chalk and magnets, landscapes and more.

Artists creatively used the space of six-feet given to them in one zone of this verdant park to display their works.

Visitors were thin in the morning, perhaps the school exam season and the heat discouraging them from stirring out, but the area packed tight after 4 p.m.

“This is a lovely opportunity for artists like us,” said one artist who with three others, all hailing from Oddanchatram, well-known for its wholesale vegetable market, took the

overnight train to take part in this show. Besides full-time artists, there were students of art, hobby artists and designers who took part.

Said Mylapore-based Dharshni, a Stella Maris fine arts student, who with a few colleagues took part, “This show was very useful for people like us. It was organised well and the exposure we got was good.”

Said Gayathree Krishna, a visitor, “It was a visual treat to witness so much talent among young artists, artists who haven’t had an opportunity to exhibit their work.”

Two, free workshops for children were also held. Both conducted by artist and social activist Shreya Suraj.



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Winners

The St. Bedes Anglo-Indian HSS 'A' team lifted the prestigious B. Somasundaram trophy, winning the TN Cricket Association's annual schools tourney for under 14 cricketers.

It beat Sri Ramachandra Public School in the final held this past week.

The team - A. Dhiraj, H. Md. Junaid, R. Tejesh Kumar, S. S. Nithin Ragava, L. K. Vigneshwar, S. Chelladurai Raja, V. Aadharshan, L. Jai Harish, J. R. Nitin Dhamodhar, S. Anirudh, K. Royal Gangwani, A. Kadin Johnson, G. Sharad, R. Sai Kaarthi and N. Vibish Marudhu.

Gerard Penny is the physical director and the cricket coach is N. Sathyanarayana Rao



City's top Cop makes time for a pep talk with IPS aspirant of Abiramapuram

Report by Sanjay Pinto

At the Greater Chennai Police headquarters, last fortnight, a scene almost straight out of the hit film '12th Fail' unfolded.

with Sandeep Rai Rathore, the CoP.

Mohan's parents had dug deep into their meagre savings to fund his engineering education.

Having been a victim of

lice, Mylapore, V. Balakrishnan (now Commissioner of Police, Coimbatore) he had immediately arranged for a cash award to recognise the youngster's good deed.

Mohan is now enthused to keep the fire in his belly intact to get those three magical letters after his name. And his appointment with the police commissioner will remain a red-letter day in his life.

■ Photo shows Mohan Kumar receiving a gift from the Chennai Police Commissioner. His father, Ramamurthy, is also in the photo.



The son of an auto-driver and fruit vendor from Abiramapuram, who is preparing for the civil services examination, had gone to lodge a complaint with the cyber crime wing.

In a eureka moment, I felt that a handshake with the top Cop would do wonders to the young IPS aspirant's morale. So, even as Mohan Kumar was lodging the complaint, I put in a word to the Commissioner of Police.

Within minutes, Mohan Kumar got a call from the Commissioner's camp clerk and was asked to come up to the 8th floor to meet the CoP at lunch time.

Not only did Mohan get a pep talk and tips to clear the examination, he was also given a gift and allowed to have a photograph clicked

discrimination and apathy since his adolescent years, this graduate has been hell-bent on changing the system by joining it. That is how his IPS dream took shape.

Ensnared behind his mother's fruit stall on C. P. Ramaswamy Road in Alwarpet, Mohan can be seen studying under streetlights with the hope of a brighter tomorrow.

Former IAS officer Israel Jebasingh had magnanimously given this deserving candidate free coaching at his Officers IAS Academy.

A few years ago, when a fire had engulfed a photo studio in the vicinity, it was Mohan's alertness and his call to 101 that helped limit the damage.

When I informed the then Deputy Commissioner of Po-



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