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Vol. 29, No. 35

January 14 - 20, 2024

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வம்பே வா...

ஜம்பு வேகமாக வீட்டுக்குள் நுழைந்தான். அவனுடைய மண்டையில் ஒரு வம்பு பகிர்ந்து கொள்ளத் தயாராக இருந்தது. 'உனக்கு விஷயம் தெரியுமா? நாதன் காலனில் இருக்கிற பிரமீளாவோட பெரிய பொண்ணு ஓடிப் போயிட்டாளாம்' என்றான் மனைவி பவானியிடம்.

'இது ஒல்ட் நியூஸ். பிரமீளாவோட சின்னப் பொண்ணும் ஓடிப் போயிட்டாளாம்.'

ஜம்புவுக்கு அவமானமாகப் போய்விட்டது. வம்புகளை முந்தித் தரும் ஜம்புவாகிய தனக்கு இந்த விஷயம் எப்படித் தெரியாமல் போனது?

'யார்கூட ஓடிப் போனானு தெரியுமா?'

'ஏதோ கிரிக்கெட் அம்பயர்கூட ஓடிட்டானு பேசிகிட்டாங்க.'

'அம்பயர்னா ஒரே இடத்துல நின்றுகிட்டு தானே இருப்பான். எப்படி ஓடினான்? அவ எப்படி ஓடினானு உனக்குத் தெரியுமா?'

'ஓடறப்ப ரன்னிங் கமென்டரி கொடுத்துகிட்டே ஓடுவாங்களா? ஏதோ ஓடிட்டா, விடுங்கனே.'

ஜம்பு விடுவதாக இல்லை. நாதன் காலனியில் இருக்கும் பிரமீளா வீட்டுக்குப் போனான்.

'நாங்க வெள்ள பாதிப்புகள் குறித்து சர்வே எடுக்க வந்திருக்கோம். வீட்டிலே எவ்வளவு நபர் இருக்கேன்?'

'நான் மட்டும்தான் இருக்கேன்.'

'அவர் இல்லையா?'

'ஓடி போயிருக்காரு.'

'ஓடிப் போயிட்டாரா?'

'O.D. ஆயில் வேலையா On Dutyலே ஓடிஸா போயிருக்காரு.'

'வீட்டிலே வேற யாரும் இல்லை யா?'

'இல்லே.'

'யாராவது ஓடிப் போயிருந்தால் கூடச் சொல்லலாம். அவங்களுக்கு ஊக்கத் தொகை கிடைக்க வாய்ப்பு இருக்கு.'

'ஓ... நன்னடத்தையைப் பாராட்டிப் பரிசா?'

'நன்னடத்தை இல்லே, ரன்னடத்தை.'

'எழுதிக்குங்க. பெரிய பொண்ணு சிம்ரன் ஓடிட்டா.'

'வெரி குட். லவ்வர்கூடத் தானே ஓடினா?'

'பின்னே... Beggar கூடவா ஓடுவா?'

ஒரு காபி குடித்துக்கொண்டே நிதானமாகப் பேசினால் இன்னும் கொஞ்சம் விஷயத்தைக் கறக்கலாம்.

'தப்பா நினைச்சுக்காதீங்க, ஒரு காபி கிடைக்குமா?'

'அடா, காபிப் பொடி தீர்ந்து போச்சே. நான் இப்பவே ஓடிப் போய் வாங்கிட்டு வந்துட்டேன்.'

'சிம்ரன் மட்டும்தான் ஓடினாளா? வேற யாரும் ஓடலயா?'

'அது உங்களுக்கு அனாவசியம்.'

'சொல்லுங்க. டாக்டர் கிட்டேயும், சர்வே எடுக்கறவங்க கிட்டேயும் எதையும் மறைக்கக் கூடாது.'

'சின்னப் பொண்ணும் ஓடிப் போயிட்டா.'

'அபாரம். பொண்ணு பெயர் என்ன?'

'வேகா.'

'எப்போ ஓடினா? தேதி சொல்ல முடியுமா?'

'சர்வேல இதைக் கூடக் கேட்பாங்களா?'

'டாடா காட்டிட்டு ஓடினதுக்கு ஒரு Data Base உருவாக்கறோம்.'

'டிசம்பர் மாசம் 5ம் தேதி.'

'வேகா யார்கூட ஓடினா?'

'எனக்குத் தெரியாது.'

'அதெப்படித் தெரியாம இருக்கும்? யோசிச்ச வைங்க, நாளைக்கு வரேன்.'

அடுத்த நாள் அதே சமயத்துக்குப் போனான் ஜம்பு.

'வேகா யார்கூட ஓடினானு சொல்ல முடியுமா. வேகா... W/0..... அப்படின்னு நிறைய புள்ளி வைச்சிருக்கேன். அது யார்னு சொன்னா போதும்.'

'நிறைய புள்ளியா? ஒரே ஒரு புள்ளிகூடத் தான் ஓடிப் போயிருக்கா.'

'யார் அந்தப் புள்ளியாண்டான்.'

'சொல்ல முடியாது.'

தன் முயற்சியில் சற்றும் மனம் தளராத விக்ரமமாதித்தன் மாதிரி ஜம்பு அடுத்த நாளும் போனான்.

'அந்த ஆள் எந்த ஊர்? அதையாவது சொல்லுங்களேன். தலை வெடிச்சிடும் போல இருக்கு.'

'அந்த ஊரின் பெயரிலேயே தலை இருக்கு. அவ்வளவுதான் சொல்ல முடியும்.'

தலை என்று ஆரம்பிக்கும் ஊரா? ஏதாவது தலையானங்கானத்துச் செரு வென்ற பாண்டியன்கூட ஓடிப் போயிருப்பானோ!

தலை என்று ஆரம்பிக்கும் ஊர் பெயர்களை எலிஸ்ட் போட்டான். அடுத்த நாள் பிரமீளா வீட்டுக்குப் போனான்.

'இதுலே பாருங்க. தலைவாசலிலே ஆரம்பிச்ச வரிசையா 15 ஊர் பெயர் இருக்கு. இதுலே எந்த ஊர்?'

'இதுலே எதுவுமே இல்லை. கடைசி வரைக்கும் முயற்சி செஞ்சு பாருங்க.'

ஜம்பு முயன்றான், முடியவில்லை.

'நீங்களே சொல்லிடுங்களேன். ஆட்டோ சார்ஜ் கட்டுபடியாக மாட்டேங்குது.'

'குளித்தலை' என்றான் பிரமீளா.

'வெள்ளம் வந்தது இல்லே? அப்போ படகுலே ஒருத்தன் வந்து வேகாவைக் காப்பாத்தினான். அவன்கூடத் தான் ஓடிப் போனா.'

'ஓடிப் போகலைங்க, ஓடத்துலே போயிருக்கா.'

'இந்த சர்வேயை வைச்சுக்கிட்டு என்ன செய்யிங்க?'

'சமூக சேவை' என்று சொல்லிவிட்டு ஜம்பு வேகமாக வீட்டுக்குப் புறப்பட்டான்.

பிரமீளாவின இரண்டாவது மகள் யாருடன் ஓடிப் போனான் என்று கண்டுபிடித்தாகிவிட்டது. அதை உடனே மனைவி பவானியிடமும், சொசைட்டியிலும் சொல்லிவிட வேண்டும்.

தன் வீட்டுக்குள் நுழைய முற்படும்போது வீட்டுக்குள் ஏதோ பேச்சுச் சத்தம். பவானியுடன் மூன்று பெண்கள் பேசிக் கொண்டிருந்தார்கள். வாசலிலேயே நின்று கேட்டான்.

'இதோ பாரு பவானி, நாங்க வம்பு பேசறோம்னு நினைக்காதே. உன் புருஷன் நாதன் காலனியிலே யாரோ ஒரு பொண்ணுடைய வீட்டுக்கு அடிக்கடி போறாராம். இது வரைக்கும் 25 தடவை போயிட்டாராம். எதுக்கும் விசாரிச்சு வை.' nandaaft@gmail.com



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An appeal to help paraplegics



By S. Vidyaaakar

What if on one morning we find ourselves not in a position to walk or even get up from our bed. It would surely be a disaster and life would surely come to a standstill.

Persons affected by paraplegia (permanent spinal injury) can neither stand, walk or even take care of their personal needs for the rest of their life and they are literally bedridden with only their mere existence in body without any activity.

It is almost a living dead situation for the paraplegics.

The floods caused by Cyclone Michaunglast December, affected hundreds of such persons due to their physical condition.

To alleviate their suffering, UdavumKarangal(NGO with branch office in 34/41, Kannadasan Salai, T. Nagar) proposes to give each of them 10 kgs of rice and other groceries to last a month.

The cost of each kit is Rs.1500.

I appeal to the readers of *Mambalam Times* to donate for the cause.

Online donations can be made in <https://myhelpinghands.org/donate/>. For clarification, donors can contact Vidyaaakar in 99401 88011.

Police make smart tweaks to ease congestion

Inventive tweaks and embrace of technology have brought traffic delays across the city dramatically down from upto 30 minutes to negligible levels, reveals a 2023 study. Not just delays, even the frequency of such slowdowns is far less than earlier.

A team from Loyola College's Department of Statistics, which studied the travel time on Anna Salai, Old Mahabalipuram Road (OMR) and T. Nagar, said that motorists earlier faced delays (of three or more minutes) at all key intersections at least three times a day.

In some locations, delays were recorded up to 25 times a day.

But a slew of interventions by Traffic Police in the last six months has brought down the delay time to zero at some intersections and it is minimal at other locations.

List of vending zones to be finalised soon

After a delay of several years, Chennai Corporation is set to announce the final list of vending zones next week as the town vending committee headed by its Commissioner J. Radhakrishnan is expected to meet in a few days to finalise the list. Once finalised, street vendors in the non-vending zones of the 200 wards are expected to be evicted and a new regulation will come into force. Corporation officials said residents would be permitted to object to the inclusion of their streets in the list of vending zones even after the final list is announced.

The Commissioner will take a decision to remove the names of roads from the list of vending zones.

As a number of roads that have been traditional vending areas are expected to be declared non-vending zones, street vendors have also requested the civic body to reconsider their decision as it will impact their livelihood.

Residents in many wards have demanded that the officials hold consultation with local residents to streamline the process. T. Nagar resident V.S. Jayaraman said vending was taking place in almost all streets with the tacit knowledge of the authorities. "The whole of the service lanes of Usman Road have become vending zones leaving little space for public movement. While demarcating vending zones, the authorities should take into account its impact on the neighbourhood, as most streets have residential colonies. An area with no residential concentration, school, temple should be selected for vending zones. The set-up should in no way deter the movement of the public and the transport system. There have to be specific timings and vendors should abide by the same," Jayaraman said. The first meeting of the Town Vending Committee was held in August 2023. Major decisions are yet to be taken owing to opposition from various stakeholders. The last meeting of the committee in December 2023 was also disrupted after a group of vendors wanted to participate in the meeting as onlookers.

"All the street vendors will get allocation of space in vending zones that have been identified," an official said.

Meanwhile, street vendors have also protested against the eviction by police in areas including K.K. Nagar without the knowledge of the Town Vending Committee.

Lit Fest mobile library launched

By Our Staff Reporter

The Hindu Lit for Life mobile library was flagged off by J. Radhakrishnan (Chennai Corporation Commissioner) on Jan. 10 in the presence of Nirmala Lakshman (Chairperson, The Hindu Group Publishing Private Ltd.) and N. Ram (Director, The Hindu Group).

The mobile library will visit various streets in the city to spread the joy of reading among residents. People may read, borrow and donate books when the vehicle is stationed during specific hours at various destinations till Jan. 25. The van will be parked outside Natesan Park (T.Nagar) from Sunday, Jan. 21 to Thursday, Jan. 25. Nirmala Lakshman said that it was the second year that the mobile library will visit various parts of the city to encourage reading among residents.

Donor lungs transported within 2 hours from Pondicherry

On Jan. 5, the lungs of a 43-year-old brain dead patient were transported by an ambulance from Pondicherry in less than two hours to a hospital on Arcot Road (Vadapalani) to save the life of an ailing patient. Traffic police in both the states ensured free transit of the ambulance carrying the lungs to avoid delay.

The woman, suffering from a severe ailment, had pledged her organs.

According to the doctors at the local hospital, the organs were successfully transplanted and the patient is stable and recovering.

Pongal freebies distributed to ration card holders



By Our Staff Reporter

Ration shops distributed Pongal gift hampers and Rs. 1,000 cash to rice ration card holders from Jan. 10.

Each gift hamper contains a piece of sugarcane, 1 kg raw rice and 1 kg sugar.

Picture taken on Jan. 11 shows a consumer collecting the gift hamper from a ration shop in Muthurangan Salai (T. Nagar).

Tamil play Thazhahall Veeram to be staged on Jan. 19



The Tamil play Thazhahall Veeram written by veteran dramatist T.V. Radhakrishnan, will be staged by the drama troupe Naatya Naadha Nataka Sangamam (founded by S. Sruthi, resident of 44/21, Bagirathi Ammal Street, T.

Nagar, Ph: 2834 4876) at 6.45 p.m on Friday, Jan. 19 in Indira Nagar Youth Hostel (Adyar).

She is the daughter of renowned dramatist S. Shivprasad and granddaughter of thespian late R.S. Manohar.

Sruthi will enact the lead role of lawyer Aishwarya and her father will act as cook Gopalan.

Tickets are priced at Rs. 100 and can be purchased at the venue.

Concert of Kishore Kumar songs next Sunday

By Our Staff Reporter

The music troupe Satrangi, headed by Pramod Nair (resident of Coast Guard Quarters, East Mogappair), will present a concert of popular Hindi film songs sung by Kishore Kumar from 6 p.m to 9 p.m on Sunday, Jan. 21 in Teach Auditorium (near Writer's Café, Taramani).

He will be accompanied by Smriti and a live orchestra.

They will present songs from movies like Amar Prem, Mere Jeevan Sathi, Aradhana, Parichay, Blackmail, Julie and more.

For door delivery of tickets priced at Rs. 250 and Rs. 400, call 98847 78073.

Aid for rooftop solar plants increased to Rs. 18,000 per kW

To encourage domestic power consumers to switch to rooftop solar generation, the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has increased the central financial assistance for installing grid-connected rooftop solar plants to Rs. 18,000 per kilowatt (kW) from the existing Rs. 14,588 per kW.

Under phase II of the grid-connected rooftop solar system, the Ministry has increased the benchmark central financial assistance (CFA) for rooftop systems ranging from one kW to three kW, installed through tendering and national portal applications.

The rooftop plants above three kW and up to 10 kW capacities will receive financial assistance of Rs. 9,000 per kW as against earlier aid of Rs. 7,294 per kW.

For resident welfare associations (RWA) or group housing societies, the CFA allocation will be Rs. 9,000 per kW for common facilities up to 500 kW at 10 kW per house.

Earlier, the CFA was Rs. 7,924 per kW for these category structures.

NGO seeks donations



By Our Staff Reporter

NGO Kalaiselvi Karunalaya Social Welfare Society (3rd Block, Vellalar Street, West Mogappair) has been providing care for orphaned/abandoned babies and elderly persons for several decades.

It has appealed for donations from the readers of Mambalam Times in the form of cash or essential items like baby milk powder, provisions and clothes for Pongal.

The NGO is presently taking care of 60 babies. Donors can contact Rajini in 94451 99619. For more details about the NGO, visit the website www.kkssindia.org

Post Office takes its schemes to the residents

By Our Staff Reporter

On Jan. 10, West Mambalam Post Office conducted a special camp in Vivekanandapuram 1st Street (West Mambalam) to promote its schemes.

Officials explained the benefits of various schemes to the residents and passersby.

Many residents were benefited from the campaign. Photo shows a resident registering for postal scheme at the camp.



Awareness event on Bhogi bonfire held



Chennai Corporation officials along with Mayor R. Priya conducted an awareness event against burning toxic products during the Bhogi festival for school students in T. Nagar on Jan. 8. She spoke against burning plastic, rubber, clothes, tyres and electric equipment as they would cause severe health hazards.

She appealed to the students to take this message to their parents too.

The Editor & staff of Mambalam Times wish you Happy Pongal

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Name board of Kuppaiah Street topples



By Our Staff Reporter

The name board of Kuppaiah Street (West Mambalam) fell across the road two weeks back.

Photo taken on Jan. 10 shows the name board resting against the trunk of a tree.

Residents of the street appeal to Chennai Corporation to install a new name board for the street.

Drive to remove encroachments to resume after monsoon

The drive to remove encroachments along water-ways in the city is set to resume after the northeast monsoon.

After the monsoon in 2022, the drive to remove encroachments was expected to be taken up along waterways such as the Adyar and Cooum.

In 2023, Chennai Corporation, Chennai Rivers Restoration Trust and Chennai District Administration were unable to remove 3,925 encroachments along the Adyar river owing to opposition from residents. "Residents are unwilling to move. There is resistance," said an official. Most of the encroachments have been identified in areas such as Saidapet, Kotturpuram and Jaffer Khanpet along the banks of the Adyar.

Corporation ward 173 councillor D. Subashini said the officials have said that biometric enumeration of residents along the Buckingham Canal will start in February. More than 1,500 encroachments have been identified in Kotturpuram along the Buckingham Canal in the ward.

Even after biometric enumeration along the Adyar, the civic body has been unable to remove encroachments in many areas. Corporation officials said residents of Annai Sathya Nagar in the ward along the Adyar river were willing to accept resettlement. Last year, the civic body resettled residents from some of the 455 encroachments in Kanu Nagar along Adyar river to Perumbakkam. However, 219 encroachments have not been removed ahead of the onset of the northeast monsoon in 2023. A total of 4,938 encroachments along the Adyar river in Corporation zones have been removed so far.

Residents have resisted the move to resettle from 139 encroachments in Jothi Ramalingam Nagar in Jaffer Khanpet, 142 in Saidapet, 280 in Surya Nagar in Kotturpuram and 1,300 encroachments in Mallipoonagar in Kotturpuram, said a Corporation official. Along the Cooum, 13,233 encroachments have been removed. At least 288 encroachments in areas such as Kathiravan Colony and Gajalakshmi Nagar in Anna Nagar zone along the Cooum have not been cleared because of court cases, said an official.

Narratives of feminine mystique

Bharatanatyam dancer and teacher Ramya Harishankar's Arpana Dance Company, based in Southern California, will present a thematic dance program SHE at 1.45 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 28 in Krishna Gana Sabha (T. Nagar) as part of its 40th anniversary. It will be followed by screening of her short film Bhumika on climate change. A past resident of T. Nagar, she moved to USA after her marriage.

Ramya and her team of Visalini Sundaram, Nitya Pujara and Shefali Appali will present the dance show curated by Malavika Sarukkai, in partnership with Shreya Nagarajan Singh's Art Development Consultancy.

"Our theme SHE explores feminine identity through movements and storytelling. It will take the audience on the mythological journey of the Devi as well as the personalised narratives weaving through classical sagas of the goddess and ending with the communal ordeals of women," she said.

Rains cause one day closure of Chennai Book Fair



By Our Staff Reporter

As the rains on Jan. 7 turned the venue slushy and stalls reported heavy leakage, Chennai Book Fair (YMCA Campus, Nandanam) was kept closed to public on Jan. 8.

Many publishers claimed that rain water had also seeped through the structure, leaving some of the stalls drenched and books damaged. "We have suffered a loss of over Rs. 1 lakh. As a small publisher, we are not sure how we can manage it," Jeeva Karikalan (Owner of Yaavaram Publishers) said.

The Fair was reopened to the public on Jan. 9, after undertaking repairs and additional measures to prevent such leakage and closure of exhibition in case of further rain in the ensuing days.



Pollution Control Board campaigns for safe Bhogi



By Our Staff Reporter

Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board has embarked on an awareness event against burning tire, plastic, rubber and other such materials that produce toxic fumes during the ensuing Bhogi festival. It has roped in auto drivers to spread the message.

The photo taken on Jan. 12 shows an auto driver distributing pamphlets to passersby and his vehicle displays a big banner to highlight the campaign.

Raised manhole covers unsafe for pedestrians



By Our Staff Reporter

The manhole covers of the storm water drain which serves as the pavement of Rajamannar Street (T. Nagar) are almost a foot above the pavement level.

They pose a danger to pedestrians as they can trip and fall, especially at night due to poor visibility.

One of the chambers is lying open as its cover is missing.

Film crew member dies at shooting site

By Our Staff Reporter

A 55-year-old man, working as a lightman, was electrocuted while working in a film set on Dec. 23.

The deceased, Shanmugam, from Tenkasi district lived in a rented apartment in Vadapalani. Shanmugam was assigned to set up lights and electrical appliances required for the film shooting in a private rice mill on Sothupakkam Road, near Red Hills. The shooting was on from noon till 10 p.m. At around 10.30 p.m., Shanmugam and his colleague Ranjith, 35, from Madurai were involved in removing wires. They were pushing a steel ladder to disconnect wires when the ladder brushed against a live wire hanging overhead, resulting in Shanmugam's electrocution, police said.

He was rushed to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

Red Hills police registered a case of accidental death and are investigating further.

MTC operates special buses for Pongal

By Our Staff Reporter

After State Transport Department announced 20,000 buses for Pongal festival, the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) started operating 450 special buses to six bus stands from where mofussil buses are operated from Jan. 12.

In a statement, Alby John Varghese (Managing Director) said that the special buses will be operated till Sunday, Jan. 14.

Also, an additional 50 evening and night buses will be operated on Wednesday, Jan. 16 and Thursday, Jan. 17 to facilitate passengers returning to the city after the Pongal festival. In the early morning on Jan. 18 and 19, 125 buses will be operated.

Buses to Pondicherry, Cuddalore and Chidambaram (via ECR) are operated from KK Nagar bus stand.

Buses to Ponneri, Gummidipoondi, Uthukottai and Andhra-bound buses via Red Hills are operated from Madhavaram bus stand.

Buses to Kumbakonam and Thanjavur through Tindivanam, Vikravandi and Panruti are operated from Tambaram Sanatorium bus stand (MEPZ).

Buses to Arcot, Arani, Vellore, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Tirupattur, Kancheepuram, Cheyyar and Hosur through Poonamallee and Tirupatibuses via Tiruttani are operated from Poonamallee.

TNSTC buses to other parts of the state, including Trichy, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Villupuram, Neyveli, Chidambaram, Coimbatore, Salem and Karaikudi are operated from Koyambedu bus terminus.

SETC buses to Trichy, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Thiruvananthapuram, Salem, Coimbatore and Karaikudi (via NH-45) are operated from the newly inaugurated KCBT in Kilambakkam.

Cables removed from pavement after report in Mambalam Times



Before



Now

By Our Staff Reporter

Following the report in Mambalam Times (Jan. 7-13 issue), a thick bunch of EB cables blocking the pavement on G.N. Chetty Road (near Geetham Vegetarian Restaurant, T. Nagar) were removed on Jan. 10.

The cables were blocking the entire pavement width causing obstruction to pedestrians.

In a span of four years, 18-year-old Mohana Vijaya Raghavi (past resident of KK Nagar) has set six world records and one national record in yoga. She recently entered the India Book of Records for being in the Ganda Bherund-asana pose for 15 minutes. After college, herevenings are dedicated to yoga, which she started learning at the age of 14.

She holds a Diploma in Yoga and has also completed teacher training in the same.

She is presently providing free yoga training for 40+ students in her college.



"Yoga has not only kept me away from the modern addiction of mobile phones,



but also to keep good mental to enter the Guinness Book of World Records," she said.

I-T team from AP searches Chennai firms

By Our Staff Reporter

Income tax sleuths from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana region carried out searches in a few firms in the city and outskirts on Jan. 9. IT sleuths from Chennai assisted them.

The offices of Refex Energy in T. Nagar, Sri City real estate firm in Mylapore and another firm in Thiruporur were among the places that were searched.

The raids related to large-scale tax evasion.

Women Helpline 1091

Dangling cables, open EB pillar box pose danger

By Our Staff Reporter

Broadband cables are dangling precariously from the street light post on North Road (CIT Nagar).

The cables extend into the carriageway, posing danger to pedestrians, especially at night due to poor visibility.

An EB pillar box next to the light post is lying open as its door is damaged.

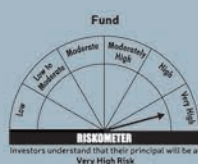
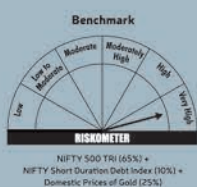


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Source: Bloomberg; Computation: In-house. Data from Jan 2010 to Sep 2023. Rolling Returns calculated on a daily basis. Multi asset model portfolio considers theoretical allocation of 25% to Gold, 10% to 10Y G-secs and the rest towards Nifty 50. Equity allocation to Nifty 50 ranges from 50% to 65% based on asset allocation framework using market valuations. Past performance may or may not be sustained in the future. The index used is CPI combined (2012 base).



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Covid pandemic	Jan '20 to Mar '20	-28.6	0.7
Ukraine-Russia conflict	Jan '22 to Jun '22	-9.0	6.3

Source: Bloomberg; In-house computation. Gold returns based on MCX Gold Index. Data from Jan 2010 to Sep 2023. Past performance may or may not be sustained in the future.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dr. Natesan Salai in bad condition



Sir, At 3.30 p.m on weekdays, a portion of Dr. Natesan Salai in Ashok Nagar teems with students leaving Kendriya Vidyalaya. Parents come by walk or in vehicles to pick up their children; several private vans and autos move about ferrying students home.

One would think a road on which a prominent school, a police training college and Central government staff quarters are located will be maintained well. However, Dr. Natesan Salai is far from walkable or motorable. The road, which runs parallel to Anna Main Road in K.K. Nagar, connects P.T. Rajan Salai and Jawaharlal Nehru Road.

Ten months back, it was completely dug up on one side for sewer work but has not been relaid. It was expected to be relaid before the rains as was done with many roads.

The road turns slushy after rains as the portions that were dug up have been closed unevenly with mud.

Due to its proximity to Ashok Nagar metro station and Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Dr. Natesan Salai is a crucial stretch for residents of K.K. Nagar and Virugambakkam and has vehicular movement all day. Yet, it has remained in a poor state for several months now.

The road has potholes and damaged speed breakers that make for a tricky, bumpy ride.

I appeal to Chennai Corporation to relay the road at the earliest. **S. Ramanan, 7th Avenue, K.K. Nagar**

Pongal festive organised for disabled couples

Sir, I am a resident of T. Nagar and Treasurer of Tamil Nadu Differently Abled Federation Charitable Trust (TNDFCT).

The Trust organised special Pongal celebration for 50 disabled couples on Jan. 10 in its premises in 4th Cross Street, Balaji Nagar, Ekka-tuthangal.

More than 200 persons including members of the Trust attended.

Lunch was served to all participants.

The Trust is a registered non-profit social service organization working for the welfare of the disabled.

It was formed in 2000 by disabled persons for the disabled.

We are catering to the multifarious needs of more than 16 lakh disabled persons in the state with state-level network in 44 districts. We welcome support from philanthropists. **Karuppaiah Thangavelu, Treasurer, TNDFCT, Ph: 95661 16271, 80158 67701**

Broken tree branches block carriageway



By Our Staff Reporter

Broken tree branches have been lying on the margin of Nathamuni Street (T. Nagar) for ten days.

Nearby residents have requested Chennai Corporation to remove the foliage from the street as it is blocking the carriageway.

Alumni provide food for students of Government School

Sir, I am a past student of Maraimalai Adigal Government Higher Secondary School (Palla-varam). A group of alumni including me joined to provide snacks for students of a Government School to motivate those appearing this year for the board exams (both Std. 10 and 12) to attend the special classes organised by the school after school hours.

Our aim is to enable the school to achieve 100 percent pass in board exams. 350 students are appearing for board exams this year.

In the recent half-yearly examination, nearly 85 percent of the students passed in all the subjects. However, to raise it to 100 percent pass, the teachers decided to conduct special classes till 6 p.m every day. The students are provided nutritious food.

We hope to continue this endeavour whenever special classes are conducted by the school. **P. Senthilnathan, Bharmakambal Street, West Mambalam**



Vasudevapuram Street in state of neglect

Sir, Vasudevapuram Street, a marginalized enclave near Kodambakkam in West Mambalam, is grappling with severe neglect from Chennai Corporation.

The most pressing issue is the caved-in drainage system.

This 20-feet-wide road, home to 50-60 families, is witnessing a dire situation as the drainage line has collapsed, leading to contaminated water overflowing onto the road.

Despite being a branch of the prominent Chakrapani Street, Vasudevapuram Street has endured a lack of sustained municipal efforts.

A partial road renovation eight years back was left incomplete, exacerbating the already narrow road's problems.

The recent collapse of the drainage line has escalated concerns, with contaminated water posing a significant health risk to the residents.

In a desperate plea to the Corporation, residents urgently request immediate action to:

1. Repair the caved-in drainage line to halt the contaminated water overflow.
2. Clear roadside debris for road widening and accessibility.
3. Lay a new road

Vasudevapuram Street residents fervently appeal to Chennai Corporation to prioritize and expedite the above three requests. **Divya, resident of Vasudevapuram, West Mambalam**



Businessman accused of financial fraud nabbed after 12 years

The Bank Fraud Wing of the Central Crime Branch (CCB) arrested a businessman, accused in a financial fraud case, after 12 years from his relative's house in Burkit Road (T. Nagar) on Jan. 7.

The accused, R. Ramesh (52), a U.S. national, is accused of cheating a financial firm by failing to repay consumer durable loans obtained in the names of employees of a firm run by his family in Hosur.

According to police, Uma Maheswari Mill Limited (Hosur) and its Directors including Ramesh and his family members, availed of consumer durable loans in the names of their employees and failed to repay the loan amount of nearly Rs. 1 crore to the complainant Upasana Finance Ltd (Mylapore).

A case was registered in 2008. After the completion of investigation, the chargesheet was filed before the Additional CCB Court, Egmore. In 2011, the court issued a non-bailable warrant against the seven accused after they failed to appear in court. On Jan. 6, based on a tip-off, a special team led by Inspector P. Saravanan arrested Ramesh in T. Nagar.

He was remanded to judicial custody.

One held in kidnap case, two at large

By Our Staff Reporter

The Pondy Bazaar police on Jan. 8 arrested Syed Abudakir (39) for abetting the kidnap and assault of A. Abdul Rahman (32) (resident of Tondiarpet) on Jan. 6, over a monetary dispute.

The main accused Ayub and another accused are absconding.

Police said Abdul had worked in a money exchange company in Mannady, run by Ayub.

He had appropriated Rs. 13 lakhs given to him by Ayu, for a money transfer.

Angered over this, Ayub and two of his friends including Syed abducted Abdul and his brother-in-law Sheikbeer Hamsa on Jan. 6, and confined them in a lodge in T. Nagar.

They intimidated and assaulted the duo, asking them to return the money. Later, the two were released by the abductors.

Based on a complaint filed by Alauddin (Abdul's father), police conducted an investigation and arrested Syed and are on the look-out for the other two.

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WEST MAMBALAM, Appasamy Street, near Kalibari Temple, 950 sq.ft, 1st floor, 2 bedrooms, hall, kitchen, pooja room, semi furnished flat, rent Rs. 18000, Brahmin and strictly for vegetarian only. Ph: 99405 83376.

WEST MAMBALAM, Thiruvengadam Street, near Ayodhya Mandapam & Jaya Medical, 1 bedroom apartment, hall, kitchen, ground floor, bath attached, cupboards, rent Rs. 11000, advance Rs. 50000. Ph: 9042552842, 9841193685.

WEST MAMBALAM, Postal Colony 2nd Street, 3 bedrooms, hall, kitchen, 3rd floor, lift, only vegetarians, open car park, rent Rs. 26000, for rent from March. Ph: 9566252779.

K.K.NAGAR, 5, Anna Main Road, near PSBB School, newly painted, 30 feet Road, prime location, east facing, 1000 sq.ft, 2 master bedrooms, hall, kitchen, CCTV camera, semi furnished, rent Rs. 16000, advance 1 lakh, lease Rs. 10 lakhs, office Rs. 35000, godown Rs. 20000, family/bachelor. Ph: 9941999191, 9841927338.

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Vidya Trust to conduct music event on Tuesday

By Our Staff Reporter

On the occasion of its 15th anniversary, Sri Vidya Trust (West Mambalam, Ph: 95660 28520), which runs old age homes, will conduct a music event from 10 a.m to 1 p.m on Tuesday, Jan.16 in its branch (33, Annai Therasa Nagar, 6th Street, Puzhithivakkam, Chennai 91). Artistes like Saxophone Alex and Arun (Mass Melodies) will perform in the event.

J.K. Manikandan (Councillor, ward 186), T. Pichandi IAS (retired) and S.D. Venkateswaran (Advocate, Madras High Court) will be the chief guests. All are welcome.

Procession on Jan. 21 to mark consecration of Ram Temple in Ayodhya

By Our Staff Reporter

To mark the consecration Sri Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Jan. 22, a procession with a full-size portrait of Lord Rama on a chariot will be taken out at 8 a.m on Jan. 21 from Sri Kothandaramar Temple (West Mambalam) to Sai Baba Temple (Jaishankar Street, West Mambalam) via Lake View Road and Thambiah Street.

This was decided at a meeting organised on Jan. 10 in Panigraha Kalyana Mandapam (Veerasamy Street, West Mambalam). Uma Anandan (Councillor, Ward 135) presided over the meeting.

After 3 p.m, the procession will go via Postal Colony, Murthy Street and nearby streets to reach Sri Ram Samaj by 7.30 p.m.

During the procession, special poojas will be performed to the portrait as it passes via the temples enroute.

Devotees will sing bhajans and other devotional songs during the procession.

On the consecration day on Monday, Jan. 22, Udayalur Kalya Bhagavathar will present special bhajans from 7 a.m to 9 a.m in Sri Ram Samaj.

Vishnu Sahasranaama Paaraayanam and other poojas will be performed throughout the day.

For the benefit of devotees, giant LED screens will be installed at Ram Samaj, Sri Vallabh Vinayak Temple and other vantage points for live telecast of the consecration ceremony in Ayodhya.

All are welcome to participate in the procession and the other programs.

Rotary conducts road safety awareness campaign

By Our Staff Reporter

In connection with Road Safety Week, Rotary International District 3232, in association with various Rotary Clubs, organised an awareness campaign on road safety in Jeeva Park (T. Nagar) and other places in the city on Jan. 12.

The campaign will continue in public places like busy junctions, parks and bus termini till Jan. 17.

On Jan. 12, the campaign was conducted in Jeeva Park (T. Nagar) with road shows and a flash mob dance to draw the attention of the public.

A team of eight performers dressed like airhostesses enacted a 1-minute play with audio presentation on the best practices of road safety. Senior Rotary members participated in the campaign.

Discourse on Bhagavad Gita today

By Our Staff Reporter

Under the auspices of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama (3, Maharajapuram Santhanam Salai, T. Nagar), Swami Guruvanananda will deliver a discourse in Tamil on Bhagavad Gita at 5.30 p.m on Sunday, Jan. 14 in the Ashram's premises.

All are welcome.

More details can be had in 2814 3896 and 2814 3514.

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A day at the Chennai Book Fair



By Archita Raghu

What we see this year at the 47th edition of the book fair is a slight improvement in accommodating a variety of book stalls compared to earlier fairs.

In the midst of classic novels, children's books, bestsellers from all over the world, comics, and regional hits, we see speeches and writings of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, anti-caste literature, books dealing with LGBTQIA+ issues and so on.

Dr. Ambedkar's photo and writings take prominence at JaiBhim Foundation's stall. Making its debut at the fair, promoters hope to reach more people with the translated version of Babasaheb's writings.

The complete translated works of Ambedkar are available for pre-booking for Rs. 12,000. Visit www.Jaibhim.net.

At Neelam Books, writings and teachings of revolutionaries like Malcolm X, Jyotirao Phule, Savitribai Phule, Thanthai Periyar, apart from Babasaheb, welcome bookworms.

Paintings of Van Gogh, Bob Marley and Pablo Neruda overlook Salt Publication's booth, which made its debut this year.

Last year, this publishing house struggled to get a space. Determined and not ready to give up, the members and writers of Salt set shop outside the ground.

The stall has varieties of books — from Tamil translations of Emily Dickinson's works, and writings of Sylvia Plath to a volume of poems by contemporary writers.

The Puzhal prison department has set up stall 333 where people can donate books. The aim is to strengthen the reading department in the jail. Apart from the book stalls, there are food booths, handicraft shops and t-shirt stores. There are also daily programs like book reading sessions, discussions with writers and other literary talks. The book fair, which is on till Jan. 21, is open from 2 p.m to 8.30 p.m on working days and from 11 a.m to 8.30 p.m on holidays.

Toilets in Mambalam railway station remain closed



By Our Staff Reporter

For more than three months, the toilets in Mambalam railway station have remained closed, inconveniencing thousands of passengers who pass through the station daily.

A shopkeeper near the station told *Mambalam Times* that this has resulted in people urinating in nearby streets and/or next to the locked toilets.

"The contract rate which the railways have set is too high which is the reason why the toilets are not looked after. Another issue is the absence of bore-well which forces contractors to get water in lorries at their cost," another shop owner said.

Women travellers are the worst affected as they are left without a choice.

"No action has been taken in spite of many complaints to officials," a commuter said.

An official at the station office said that renovation works will be started soon and there are plans to convert them into bio-toilets.

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Gopinath nominated as Honorary PRO of Exnora International



By Our Staff Reporter
K. Gopinath (resident of 50/

70, 9th Avenue, Ashok Nagar) has been nominated as Honorary Public Relations Officer of Exnora International Foundation by M. B. Nirmal (Founder President)

He is a social activist and State General Secretary of Tamilnadu Udayikkaram Association for the Welfare of Differently Aabled (TNUA

WDA).

Photo shows Gopinath receiving the letter from S. Senthur Pari (President) in the presence of V. Subramani (Treasurer) and Kasi Mohana sundaram (Administrative Officer).

His contact numbers are 9790820194 and 9444891338.

DoT cautions against Dial *401# request from unknown callers

By Our Staff Reporter

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued a warning to mobile phone subscribers, cautioning against dialling *401# followed by an unknown mobile number, as it may lead to cyber fraud.

Scammers typically pose as customer service representatives, claiming issues with the subscriber's SIM card or network quality, and instruct them to dial a specific code.

Enabling the call activates unconditional call forwarding to an unknown mobile number, enabling possibility of cyber fraud.

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