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நல்ல சகுனத்தில் சுமங்கலிகள் எதிரே வருதல் என்று போட்டிருந்தது.

‘நீ தினமும் கார்த்தாலே எந்திருச்ச உடனே என் எதிர்க்கே வந்து நில்லு’ என்றார் மனைவி சரசுவிடம்.

திடீரென அவருக்கு சந்தேகம் வந்தது. சுமங்கலிகள் என்று பன்மையில் போட்டிருக்கிறதே! தனக்கு இருப்பது ஒரு மனைவிதானே!

‘நீ ஒரு தடவை என் முன்னால் வந்து நிக்கறே. அப்புறம் உள்ளே போயிட்டு மறுபடியும் வந்து நிக்கறே’ என்றார்.

இப்படிப்பட்ட சகுன சபாபதி ஊருக்கு வெளியே ஒரு வீட்டை வாங்கினார்.

‘ஏங்க, சகல வசதியும் இருக்காணு பார்த்துக்குங்க’ என்றான் சரசு.

‘சகல வசதி யாருக்கு வேண்டும்? சகுன வசதி செமையா இருக்கு’ என்றார் சபாபதி.

தன் கையில் வைத்திருந்த பேப்பரை எடுத்துப் படிக்க ஆரம்பித்தார்.

‘முதல் நல்ல சகுனம், கன்னிப் பெண் தண்ணீர்க் குடத்துடன் வருதல். இது நிச்சயம் நடக்கும்.’

‘எப்படி?’

‘எதிர் வீட்டிலே ஒரு பொண்ணு இருக்கு. அவங்க வீட்டிலே தண்ணீர்க் கஷ்டம். நம்ம வீட்டிலே வந்து தண்ணீர் பிடிச்சுக்கலாம்னு சொல்லியிருக்கேன்.’

தினமும் அவ முகத் துல முழிப்பேன். எல்லா காரியமும் எனக்கு ஜெயம்தான்.’

‘அதெல்லாம் சரி, அவ கன்னிப் பொண்ணுதானா?’

எக்குத் தப்பாய்க் கேள்வி கேட்கிறானே!

‘சுடுகாட்டுக்குப் பக்கத்துலே போய் வீட்டை வாங்கியிருக்கீங்கனே.’

‘பிணம் எதிரே வருதல் ஒரு நல்ல சகுனம். தினம் ஒரு பிணம் நம்ம தெரு வழியா போகும். நாம் அமோகமா இருப்போம். சனிக்கிழமையானா ரெண்டு பிணம் போகும்.’

‘என் தலையெழுத்து, உங்களைக் கட்டிக்கிட்டேன்.’

‘அடுத்த சகுனம் ரொம்பப் பெரிய சகுனம். யானையைக் காணுதல்.’

‘யானை வாங்கப் போறீங்களா?’

‘அட, நல்ல ஐடியாவா இருக்கே! யானை ஆன்லைனிலே கிடைக்குமா? டோர் டெலிவரி செய்வாங்களா?’

‘டோர் டெலிவரியா? டோர் இடிக்குமே!’

‘கோவில் மணி ஓசையைக் கேட்டால்கூட நல்ல சகுனமாம். பக்கத்துலேயே நாமளே ஒரு கோவிலைக் கட்டிடுவோம். யானை நிதினனு நன்கொடை வசூலிச்சுக் கோவிலுக்கு ஒரு யானையை யும் வாங்கிடுவோம்.’

‘எல்லோரும் யானையைப் பிச்சை எடுக்க வைப்பாங்க. நீங்க யானை வாங்கறதுக்கே பிச்சை எடுக்கப் போறீங்க. பேஷ், பேஷ்.’

‘அக்கம் பக்கம் இருக்கிறவங்க ரொம்ப நல்லவங்க. வலது பக்க வீட்டிலே பாலானு ஒருத்தர் இருக்கார். அவர், அவரோட மனைவி, அப்புறம் பவானி. மூணு பேர் இருக்காங்க. பவானி ரொம்ப நல்ல மாதிரின்னு சொன்னார்.’

புது வீட்டுக்குக் குடி போய்விட்டார்கள். வாஷிங் மெஷினை எடுத்து வீட்டின் முன் பக்கத்தில் வைத்தார் சபாபதி.

‘துளசி மாடம் வைக்கிற மாதிரி வாஷிங் மெஷினை ஏன் முன்னாலே கொண்டு வந்து வைச்சிருக்கீங்க?’

‘இதுக்கும் தினமும் தண்ணீர் ஊத்தணும் சரசு.’

‘நல்ல சகுனத்துலே நாலாவது பாயின்ட் இது. அழுக்குத் துணிகளைத் துவைக்க எடுத்துப் போவதைப் பார்த்தல். வாஷிங் மெஷின் வாசலிலே இருந்தா நீ அழுக்குத் துணியோட போவே. அதை நான் பார்ப்பேன்.’

‘சத்தம்.’

‘உனக்கு தினமும் அழுக்குத் துணி கிடைக்கலென்னா பக்கத்து வீட்டுத் துணியைக்கூட எடுத்துண்டு போகலாம். சகுனம் ரொம்ப முக்கியம்.’

அடுத்த நாள் காலை சபாபதி வாசலுக்கு வந்தார். திடீரென ஒரு கழுதை கத்தியது.

‘சரசு, வேகமா ஓடி வா’ என்று கத்தினார்.

‘ஏன் கழுதை மாதிரிக் கத்தறீங்க?’

‘கழுதைதான் கத்துது. எப்போத்போட்ட நல்ல சகுனம்! கடவுளா பார்த்துக் கழுதையை அனுப்பியிருக்கார். அந்தக் கழுதையைப் பாரேன். என்னைப் பார், யோகம் வரும்னு சொல்ற மாதிரி இருக்கு இல்லே?’

‘இப்போ அதுக்கு என்ன?’

‘கழுதையை நாம் போஷாக்கா வைச்சுக்கணும். நீ தினமும் கழுதைக்குப் பேப்பர் போடறே!’

‘வீட்டிலே அவ்வளவு பேப்பர் இல்லே.’

‘உன்னோட கோல் நோட்டை எல்லாம் எடுத்துப் போடேன். வேண்டாம், அதுக்கப்பறம் கழுதை ஓவரா நெளிய ஆரம்பிச்சுடும்.’

மாலை ஆறு மணிக்குப் பக்கத்து வீட்டுக்குப் போனார் சபாபதி.

‘வாங்க, ரொம்ப ராசியான ஏரியாவுக்குக் குடி வந்திருக்கீங்க’ என்றார் பாலா.

‘பவானி இல்லையா?’

‘பவானியும், என் மனைவியும் வெளியே போயிருக்காங்க. வந்தவுடனே நானே பவானியை உங்க வீட்டுக்குக் கூட்டிண்டு வரேன்.’

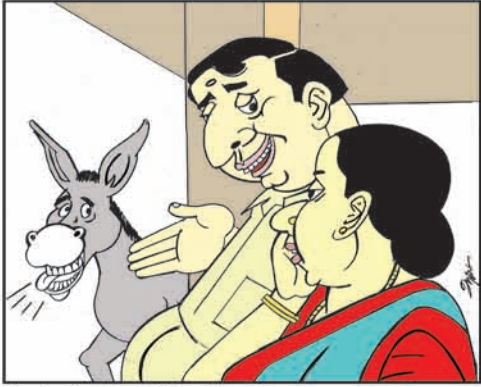
கால் மணி நேரத்தில் சபாபதியின் வீட்டுக் காலிங் பெல் அடித்தது. திறந்தால் பக்கத்து வீட்டு பாலா. அவருடைய கையில் ஒரு பெரிய பூனை.

‘இதுதான் பவானி. நல்ல மாதிரி. தினமும் கார்த்தாலே உங்க வீட்டுக்கு அனுப்பிடறேன்.’

‘பாவி! பூனைக்கு பவானி என்று பெயர் வைப்பார்களா? தினசரி காலையில் பூனை தரிசனமா? மோசம் போய்விட்டேனே!’

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Chennai Metro launches 'pink squad' for safety of woman passengers



In a bid to improve the safety of women passengers, Chennai Metro has recruited 20 to 25 women trained in martial arts to carry out round-the-clock patrolling on metro trains and in the stations.

The 'pink squad', which was launched on Feb. 15, will address the grievances of women passengers.

"These are personnel who have obtained brown belt in martial arts, and they have been briefed on how to improve the security of women passengers," an official said.

There have been instances where male passengers continued to occupy seats in the women's coach even after announcements were made requesting them to move to the general coaches.

Of the four coaches in Chennai Metro trains, three are for all passengers, and one has been reserved exclusively for women.

The 'pink squad' was formed following suggestions based on a survey on the safety of women passengers carried out last year.

Mambalam Times can be accessed in
www.mambalamtimes.in

Smart poles are not functioning

By Our Staff Reporter

Most of the 49 smart poles installed across the city including T. Nagar are not functioning. Inaugurated with fanfare in 2021 under the Nirbhaya Fund, the smart poles were designed to offer free wi-fi, SOS connectivity to a control room in Ripon Buildings, CCTV cameras and an array of features for pedestrian safety.

Except for the smart pole installed near Ashok Pillar (Ashok Nagar), the rest of them installed in Natesan Park, G.N. Chetty Road, Thyagaraya Road (near Hawkers Complex) and Venkatanaraya Road (T. Nagar) are either lying defunct or have been vandalized.

Several roadside vendors have encroached the space surrounding the smart pole on Thyagaraya Road.

As proper awareness was not created by Chennai Corporation, many do not know they can raise complaints or summon helping the 2-way communication facility on the poles.

"I was under the impression that it is a CCTV surveillance facility for the police and not a public utility service," a resident of G.N. Chetty Road told Mambalam Times.

A senior Corporation official said that the facility was let out for maintenance to a contractor for 5 years.

He said as per instructions of Corporation Commissioner J. Radhakrishnan, steps will be taken soon to get all the facilities functional and suitable action will be taken against the contractor.

Cable drum blocks carriageway

By Our Staff Reporter

A large empty cable drum has been kept on Mooparan Street (T. Nagar). A car has been parked next to the drum.

According to nearby residents, the drum has been lying at the spot for more than four months. They appealed to TNEB to remove the drum from the spot as it is an eyesore and is blocking the way for pedestrians.



Udhayam Theatre set to down shutters

By Our Staff Reporter

Udhayam theatre, one of the city's iconic cinema halls, is set to be pulled down to make way for a residential complex to be constructed on the prime 1.31-acre property in Ashok Nagar.

According to a source, real estate firm Casagrand is in talks to buy this property. "The talks are in the final stages," he said.

The iconic theatre, spanning more than 1.3 acres in Ashok Nagar, opened in 1983. The four-decade-old theatre was featured in several Tamil movies. There are references about the theatre in songs too, including 'Udhayam theatre-la En idhayathaitholachen' (I lost my heart at Udhayam Theatre). The plot houses Udhayam, Mini Udhayam, Suriyan and Chandran theatres.

Cinema buffs expressed sadness over the shutting down of the iconic theatre.

S. Sridhar (Secretary, TN Theatre Owners Association) said that close to 300 theatres across the state were on the verge of closure due to losses.



Satsang in Pandian Hall today evening

By Our Staff Reporter

Yogi Ramsurathkumar Satsang will hold its monthly satsang from 4 p.m to 7 p.m on Sunday, Feb. 18 in Pandian Hall (Station Road, West Mambalam).

There will be yogi naama chanting, Rama naama chanting followed by thirupugazh, Guru anubhavam, naamasankeertanam, bhajans and padha poojai.

Krishnamurthy (Spiritualist) will speak on Yogi Ramsurathkumar's spiritual journey.

The program will conclude with ashtothraarathi and prasadam distribution.

All are welcome.

By Our Staff Reporter

On the occasion of Rathasaptami, Vidasiras group performed Surya Namaskarapaaraayanam in Guha Flats, 1st Street, Vivekanandapuram, West Mambalam, on Feb. 16.

They recited all the 12 suryanamaskaara mantras.

Reciting these mantras whilst practising Surya Namaskar creates a balanced flow of pranic energy within the body, providing a sense of internal harmony.



Vidasiras group performs Surya namaskarapaaraayanam

Woman held for cheating

Rithanya Chandrasekar (38) (resident of T. Nagar), an entrepreneur, was arrested on charges of cheating an event management company by not paying its fees and for not paying returns on an investment made by a former staff member of her company.

Police said Rithanya runs a tours and travels firm in the city. Last year, she approached an event management company, run by Vijayakumar (31), for a promotional event in Karaikudi in November last year. The company invited television artistes for the event which was conducted as per schedule. While the firm sent her a bill for Rs. 2.35 lakhs, Rithanya paid only Rs. 1 lakh. She had also cheated her former employee S. Satish (32) by persuading him to invest in her firm in return for good interest.

In his complaint filed in Mambalam police station, Satish alleged that Rithanya not only failed to pay him any returns, but had also refused to return the principal amount.

When Rithanya was appearing before Madras High Court in connection with an EOW case, a police team arrested her and she was remanded to judicial custody.

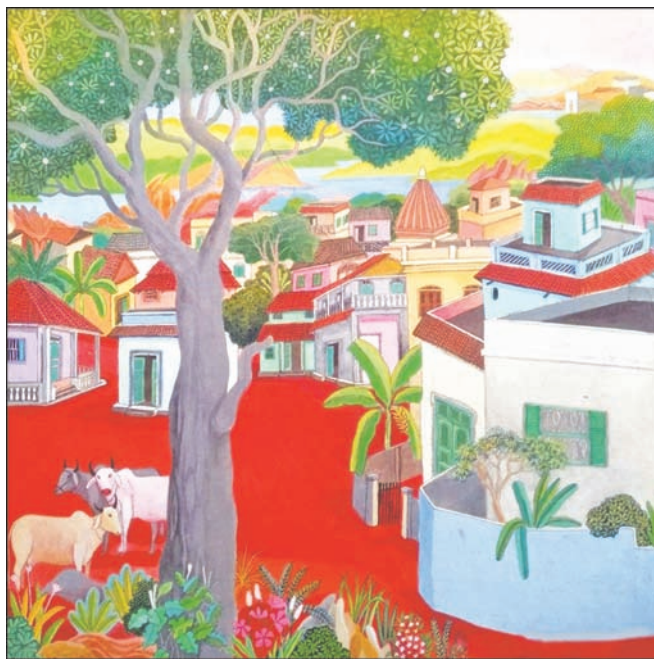
Art exhibition features contemporary Hyderabad

By Our Staff Reporter

An exhibition of paintings, graphics, and drawings capturing the essence of Hyderabad city, presented by renowned artist Sumanto Chowdhury, is on in Artworld Sarala's Art Centre (1, 12, 3rd Street, off Cenotaph Road, Ganeshpuram, Teynampet) till Feb. 29.

His paintings are an amalgamation of historical aspects and the contemporary. His work revolves around the daily life of localities within the natural environment of urban and suburban Hyderabad.

"Being a native of Hyderabad, I have dedicated the past 10 years to capturing the landscape of Hyderabad, experiencing the cityscape's many changes, including demolitions and construction, and amalgamating them to recreate the compositions," Sumanto said.



Elderly man dies of drug overdose

A 68-year-old man died of suspected overdose after consuming excess painkiller tablets at his home in Mambalam at night on Feb. 9. The deceased was identified as M. Rangasamy.

At night on Feb. 9, he was found unconscious after which his family members admitted him in Government Royapettah Hospital. He passed away in the hospital the next day.

On information, Ashok Nagar police registered a case and secured the body.

Investigations revealed that the deceased was a diabetic and had undergone a surgery two months back on his legs.

Probe revealed that he was prescribed painkiller tablets and on the fateful night, due to unbearable pain, he took more than ten tablets at once and fell unconscious.

Further investigations are on.

3-day health awareness camp from tomorrow

By Our Staff Reporter

Akash Nutrition Center (20, Crescent Park Street, T. Nagar) will conduct a health awareness camp for three days from Monday, Feb. 19 to Wednesday, Feb. 21.

The camp will start at 7 a.m daily. Investigation like body fat, visceral fat, BMI etc. will be done.

Breakfast will be provided free for participants.

For more details, call 9025292531/8056056685.

Young adults with special needs run snack bar

By Our Staff Reporter

Arvind Foundation, a charitable organization for special needs children, recently opened Arvind Sitrundiat 387, 27th Street, 6th Sector, K. K. Nagar (opposite Punjab National Bank), a snack bar run by young adults with special needs who have received extensive training in culinary skills.

Arvind Sitrundiat offers a wide range of vegetarian dishes including bhajjis, vadas, sundals and chat items.

It is open from 3.15 p.m to 5 p.m. For more details call 9841034234.

Humour Club meets today

By Our Staff Reporter

Humour Club of T. Nagar will meet at 4 p.m on Sunday, Feb. 18 in The Stenographers Guild (1, Guild Street, T. Nagar, behind Siva-Vishnu Temple).

91-year-old E. Selvarajan (Proprietor, Balamurugan Transports and President of Tamilnadu Mini Lorry Owners Association) will be the Chief Guest.

There is no entrance fee.

All are welcome to participate and share their jokes.

For more details, contact S. Sekar (Founder) in 97907

Discourse on Bhagavad Gita today

By Our Staff Reporter

Under the auspices of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama (3, Maharajapuram Santhanam Salai, T. Nagar), Swami Guruvaramanda will deliver a discourse in Tamil on Bhagavad Gita at 5.30 p.m on Sunday, Feb. 18 in the Ashram's premises.

All are welcome.

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

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Boy electrocuted on YMCA ground



By Our Staff Reporter

A 11-year-old boy playing basketball at YMCA Ground (Nandanam), died on Feb. 10 after he stepped on a live wire lying exposed on the open ground adjacent to the court.

Riyan Adhav, a Std. 6 student, had been training at the YMCA for the past few months.

Around 6 p.m on Feb. 10, he stepped out of the court to fetch the ball when he came in contact with the live wire and was electrocuted.

His coach and other students took him to hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Riyan's parents Dayal Sundaram and Geetha Priya are senior doctors in a private hospital in Thousand Lights.

Police are trying to find out whether the wire was laid by the YMCA management or by private contractors who hosted events during the weekend.

The YMCA ground is often rented for private events during weekends. On Saturday and Sunday, there were four different events including a cinema music concert, police said.

Adhav's body was handed over to his parents after postmortem in Royapettah Government Hospital.

Kanchipuram idli on wheels



By Our Staff Reporter

Nethaji Durai's 'shop on wheels' sells Kanchipuram kovilidli, famously associated with the Varadaraja Perumal temple in Kanchipuram.

He slices the cylindrically-shaped idli into two, and further cuts them into neat smaller pieces, much like cake.

All this in front of the customer who has pre-booked his order.

Made using raw rice, urad dal and par-boiled rice with fenugreek seeds, along with pepper, jeera and other ingredients, the Kanchipuram idli is different from the popular idli that is a regular on the breakfast menu in most South Indian households.

"And much tastier," says Nethaji, "You do not usually get this in hotels in Chennai. Even in Kanchipuram, the few hotels offering it do not prepare in the authentic way," he said.

The idlis, prepared in the traditional way by an Iyengar family in Kanchipuram daily in the morning, are sent through by bus to Koyambedu, from where Nethaji picks them up.

Each idli weighs two to two-and-a-half kilos, and is priced at Rs.240 for 500 gm.

Earlier, Nethaji was delivering these idlis to customers at their doorstep, but that became logistically difficult.

So, he came up with an idea: every morning, he stations his two-wheeler at a prominent spot in a particular neighbourhood; West Mambalam on Tuesdays, Triplicane on Wednesdays, Besant Nagar on Thursdays, Mylapore on Fridays and Nanganallur on Saturdays.

On Tuesdays, his 'shop on wheels' is stationed on Murthy Street, near Ayodhya Mandapam, West Mambalam.

For prebooking your orders, contact Durai in 86678 71438 or 98842 56599.

Swarna Rathna award presented to violinist Vittal Ramamurthy

By Our Staff Reporter

Renowned violin player Vittal Ramamurthy (resident of Bhakthavatsalam Street, West Mambalam) was presented the Swarna Ratna Award by Swaralaya Sadhana Foundation (Mangalore) recently. Ramamurthy began learning Carnatic music from his mother, Krishnaveni. He was introduced to violin by his grandfather, B.V. Subba Rao. He continued training under Hosahalli Venkataram and T. Rukmini.

He has performed over 6,000 concerts worldwide.

He has played with Lalgudi Jayaraman in his vocal-violin duet and trio concerts, and has also accompanied veteran vocalists

including D. K. Jayaraman, Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna, R. K. Srikanthan, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, Madurai T. N. Seshagopalan and many others.

He has also accompanied high-profile instrumentalists including N. Ramani (flute), Kadri Gopalnath (saxophone), N. Ravikiran (Chitravina) and Shashank Subramanyam (flute).

He has participated in the World Music Festival at the Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, and other international festivals in Singapore and Dubai.

As a musicologist, he has delivered demonstration lectures and organized workshops at Rice University (Houston), Concordia University (Montreal) and Harvard University (Boston).

Every year, Ramamurthy and his family organise free summer camps for around 250 children from surrounding villages in their hometown of Karunbithil Shibira in Karnataka.



Chlorine-free swimming pool in Saidapet

By Our Staff Reporter

Blues by Tiki Taka, the city's latest sports recreational facility in 18, South Mada Street, Srinagar Colony (Saidapet) has a chlorine-free, ozone-treated, semi-Olympic swimming pool.

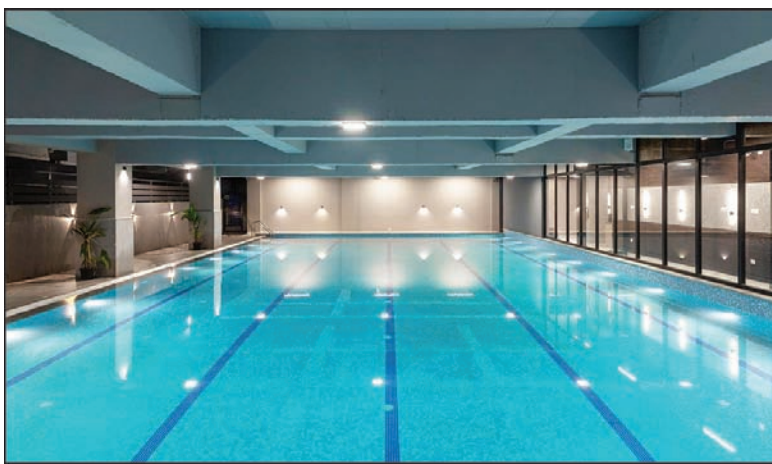
The facility is also home to four wooden-floor

badminton courts. Officially launched in January, the facility spread across two floors, follows a sleek design replete with box lights, with a largely blue-grey colour palette.

The ground floor houses the semi-Olympic pool with a depth of three-and-a-half to five feet, changing room and shower rooms with lockers.

The first floor has three wooden badminton courts with a designated space for a sports equipment kiosk. The court, with no air-conditioning, has vents running all around to facilitate free flow of air.

"This the first no-chlorine, public pool in Tamilnadu," Lakshmi Palaniappan (Director, Tiki Taka) said. Its contact number is 79426 92664.



Shops, abandoned vehicles block Anna Main Road

By Our Staff Reporter

Slow civic work by Metro-water, encroachments and abandoned vehicles have occupied half of Anna Main Road which connects areas such as KK Nagar, Nesapakkam and Ramapuram.

As a result, the 80feet road has shrunk to

about 40feet on several stretches. This 2.5-km four-lane bus route road has been in shambles for nearly five years now, with just 2 lanes being usable. Though Metrowater has relaid sewage and water pipelines, it has remained incomplete for months.

K. Dhanasekaran (Councillor, Ward 137, K. K. Nagar) said Metrowater had been delaying underground pipeline works near Nesapakkam and was yet to handover the road to Chennai Corporation. As two lanes are closed, even MTC buses use a single lane, further narrowing the stretch near Nesapakkam, leading to traffic snarls.

To avoid traffic, two-wheeler riders use the pavements endangering the lives of pedestrians. The two encroached lanes are full of fruit shops, tea stalls and abandoned vehicles rusting for years. A local activist said that since two-lanes are encroached, MTC buses from KK Nagar depot skip Nesapakkam.

"Instead of coming to Nesapakkam and going to Saligramam, buses now skip the route citing congestion and directly go to Jawaharlal Nehru Road," he said.



Literary contest conducted in PSBB School

By Our Staff Reporter

PSBB Group of Schools organised Lingua Safari, an inter-school literary fest for students of Stds. 6, 7 and 8 on Feb. 17 in its T. Nagar branch in Thirumalai Road.

Several interesting competitions to showcase the creativity and language prowess of the students were held.

Sheela Rajendra (Dean and Director, PSBB Group of Schools) was the Chief Guest.

Ramya Kannan (Tamilnadu Chief of Bureau, *The Hindu*) presented prizes to the winners.

Abandoned vehicles encroach roads and pavements

By Our Staff Reporter

Chennai Corporation, which is supposed to remove and auction abandoned vehicles, identified more than 1,300 abandoned cars last year, but has so far removed only about 250.

As no efforts have been made since January, cars are regularly dumped on roadside, say residents.

Scores of rusted cars, autos and trucks lie on the sides of roads in areas such as KK Nagar and Pudupet.

In Sector 13 in KK Nagar, residents have complained about more than 50 abandoned cars with no wheels lying for months on Jeevanandam Salai, Balasubramaniam Salai and 83rd Street.

"The roadside mechanics from various areas use these streets to keep abandoned cars. They park here, remove the wheels and leave, causing traffic jams and depriving residents of walking space," said a local resident.

Initiative launched to curb driving on wrong lane

By Our Staff Reporter

Traffic Police on Feb. 14 launched its 'Neenga Road Rajava?' (Are you the king of the road?) initiative seeking members of the public to share photographs of vehicles driving in the wrong lane to enable police to take action.

To mark the occasion, an awareness movie on the offence directed by renowned film maker Vignesh Sivan was released.

A senior official said that the social media team of the city police will be constantly monitoring the posts under the hashtag and action will be taken as per law.

Police said this leads to many accidents and that they had booked 60,181 violators for the offence last year.

Is anything interesting happening in your street or locality?

Please inform Mambalam Times!

Appeal for donations to help orphaned infants



By Our Staff Reporter

Kalaiselvi Karunalaya (3rd Block, Vellalar Street, West Mogappair, Ambattur Industrial Estate) is taking care of 32 children from the age of a few days to 6 years.

In the last 3 months it has received 8 cradle babies from various Child Welfare Committees.

K. Rajini Devi (Joint Secretary) appeals to the readers of *Mambalam Times* for donations in the form of milk powder tins, diapers and medicines for the babies.

Interested donors may contact Rajini in 94451 99619 or visit the website <http://www.kkssindia.org/>.

Debris dumped near garbage bins



By Our Staff Reporter

A big heap of construction debris has been dumped under the overhead TNEB transformer and next to the garbage bins on Srinivasa Pillai Street (West Mambalam).

A nearby resident told this reporter that the debris was dumped by unknown persons at night at the spot.

Old apartment complex demolished for redevelopment

By Our Staff Reporter

A decades-old apartment building on Srinivasa Street (West Mambalam) is being demolished for redevelopment.

Photo taken on Feb. 12 shows an excavator deployed to demolish the building.



Tenders floated to re-lay 1,173 roads

By Our Staff Reporter

Chennai Corporation has floated a tender to re-lay 1,173 roads at an estimated cost of Rs 150 crore across all its zones under the State Finance Commission fund for the fiscal year 2024-2025.

The civic body has carried out over 2,000 road re-laying processes across the city in the current financial year.

On the other hand, several roads are yet to be relaid after the road milling was completed.

The Corporation maintains 488 bus route roads and 34,640 interior roads.

Disabled persons protest demanding govt. jobs

By Our Staff Reporter

Ten months have passed since Chief Minister MK Stalin said all backlog in government vacancies under 4% quota for disabled persons would be filled through special exams and recruitment. But nothing has happened and no announcement has been made to hold the special exam or recruitment. On Feb. 13, more than 100 disabled persons resorted to 'road roko' on Arcot Road, near Kodambakkam bridge urging the government to fulfil its promise. They were detained and kept in a marriage hall.



Flyover eases congestion at Anna Salai - Venkatanarayana Road junction

By Our Staff Reporter

Throughout the city, Metro Rail work has led to chaotic traffic conditions during peak hours, with vehicles waiting in long queues.

However, the construction of the limited-use flyover, now called the Moopanar Flyover, has helped to divert a two-wheelers and light vehicles bound for Anna Salai, and the diversion of traffic at Anna Salai-Venkatanarayana Road-Chamiers Road junction has brought some relief from congestion.

In the distant past, the junction, located near the Nandanam intersection, had so little traffic that the need for traffic police was hardly



felt. The construction of the Kotturpuram flyover opened the floodgates as motorists started using this stretch to go to and come from the Sardar Patel Road junction to reach Alwarpet and Anna Salai. Soon the junction became crowded. But a long line of vehicles still waits at the signal at peak hours because of a private school and several commercial establishments near the junction.

Geriatric hospital opened in Kings Institute

By Our Staff Reporter

The upgraded National Centre of Ageing and Hospital was inaugurated in Kings Institute (Guindy) on Feb. 14.

After being initially launched as the Institute of Ageing, the hospital was converted as the COVID Care Centre during the pandemic to attend to the rising

number of Covid cases. The old building has been repaired and its infrastructure has been improved to cater to the needs of the elderly.

The hospital will have specialists across various departments including neurology, orthopaedics, cardiology, general medicine, palliative care and others.



Street damaged



By Our Staff Reporter

A 3-foot stretch of the entire width of South Dhandapani Street (T. Nagar) is badly damaged. The bitumen surface is missing and the damaged section is littered with gravel stones. It is causing hardship to motorists, especially bikers.

Naamasankeerthana Vaibhavam in Vani Mahal from Feb. 22

By Our Staff Reporter

Sree Naamasankeerthana Vaibhavam will be conducted from Thursday, Feb. 22 to Sunday, March 3 in Vani Mahal (Thyaga Brahma Gana Sabha, GN Chetty Road, T. Nagar).

It has been organised jointly by Brahma Gana Sabha and Kanchi Mahaswami Vidya Mandir (Chennai).

On the inaugural day, the Kanchi Mahaswami Nama Sudha Vani birudhu will be conferred on 'Jalra' Ramamurthy Bhagavathar.

It will be followed by Naamasankeerthanam by a team from Sastra University.

Ramamurthy Bhagavathar has been performing Nama-sankeerthanam for over 50 years. He extends regular Nama pracharakainkaryam in all major Adhistanams.

Due to his prowess in playing Jalra instrument, Kanchi Maha Swamigal had conferred the title of Jalraon him.

The following is the program till Sunday, Feb. 26

Friday, Feb. 23:

4.30 p.m: B. Mankandan Bhagavathar presents Thodaya Managlam and Guru Keerthanam

6.30 p.m: Saadhu Keerthanam and Abhangs by S. Manikanteswaran Bhagavathar

Saturday, Feb. 24:

4.30 p.m: Ashtapathi (1-7) by A. Srikanth Bhagavathar

6.30 p.m: Krishna Divyanaamam (Annai Keerthanangal) by Kadayannallur Rajagopala Das Bhagavathar

Sunday, Feb. 25:

4.30 p.m: Ashtapathi (8-14) by Ashwin Kumar Bhagavathar

6.30 p.m: Ashtapathi (15-18) jointly by Harihara Subramaniam Bhagavathar and V. Raja Rao.

There is no participation fee. All are welcome to attend the namasankeerthanam.

Man arrested for cheating job aspirants

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) of the city police on Feb. 13 arrested K. Sivaraj (33) (resident of Saidapet) for cheating the public to the tune of several lakhs after promising them jobs in Canada.

The police registered a case based on a complaint from N. Shanmugam (47) of Ramanathapuram who ended up losing close to Rs 15 lakhs after contacting Sivaraj's agency on seeing a newspaper advertisement.

However, after receiving the money, he neither arranged the job nor did he return the money after which Shanmugam approached the police. Investigations by police revealed that Sivaraj had cheated more than 20 job aspirants to the tune of Rs 1 crore in the last two years, promising them jobs in Canada.

He was arrested, produced before a magistrate and remanded in judicial custody.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Appeal to revamp bus-stop shelters



Sir, With summer approaching, there is an urgent need to have proper bus-stopshelters for passengers.

While the roof is damaged or missing in some shelters, some have damaged seats or the pavements are uneven forcing passengers to wait on the road.

There are no shelters in some stops as they have been shifted owing to the ongoing metro rail works.

Also, homeless persons often occupy the benches or sleep under the shelter to beat the sun, forcing passengers to wait on the road.

The bus shelter on G. N. Chetty Road (near Giri Street junction, T. Nagar), which was demolished for the construction of storm water drain, has still not been rebuilt.

Similarly, owing to shifting of bus stop due to metro rail work, there is no shelter for passengers at Thanikachalam Road Bus Stop (PondyBazaar, T. Nagar).

N. Palaniappam, Social Worker, Postal Colony, West Mambalam

Waste dumped outside Natesan Park



By Our Staff Reporter

Garlands, banana stalks and other decoration items used in a function, have been dumped on the pavement outside Natesan Park (Kannadasan Street, T. Nagar).

Bags with silt removed from storm water drains have also been dumped at the spot.

Park visitors and nearby residents have appealed to Chennai Corporation to remove the waste from the spot.

Appeal for small bus service

Sir, For the benefit of the residents of West Mambalam, Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) should start small bus service between T. Nagar and Egmore via Arya Gowda Road, Postal Colony and Brindavan Street.

This will help many residents of West Mambalam who are dependent on MTC buses to reach Egmore station. **R. Gopichandran, West Mambalam**

Area Sabha Meet not held in West Mambalam

Sir, Area Sabha Meet for West Mambalam has not yet been announced.

There are several civic issues in the area and the area sabha meet will provide an opportunity for the residents to raise their grievances.

As ward councillors of many areas in the city including Ashok Nagar, K.K. Nagar and T. Nagar have conducted the meetings this month, we hope our councillor will also conduct the meeting soon.

The residents should be made aware of the meet well in advance. **A.S. Thirumalai, 5, Vinayagam Street, West Mambalam**

Govt. school students showcase photos shot by them

More than 800 shortlisted photographs, shot by 560 students from government schools in 11 districts, were showcased at an exhibition titled 'Unseen Perspectives', held in Lalit Kala Akademi on Feb. 16 and 17.

One of the exhibitors G. Bharati (resident of TNHB Quarters, West Mambalam) is a student of Government Model Higher Secondary School (Saidapet).

After handling a camera and mobile phones at school, Bharathi got to take a DSLR camera to her home in Gummidipoondi for the Deepavali holidays to take photographs; to tell a story.

"For the first time I visited my father's workplace. He and his friends were very encouraging. I spent all my holidays documenting them to do justice to their work," said Bharathi, who has since developed a keen interest in photography.

It is a culmination of a year-long workshop the students (Std. 9-12) participated in.

This is part of an Art Labs project, introduced by the School Education Department, where students of government model schools take up extra-curricular activities. Mentored by photojournalist M. Palani Kumar and 11 other trainers in the districts, the students were taught the nuances of photography. "This was the first time that photography has been introduced to students and they have been encouraged to take photos that depict stories about people and their livelihood," he said.

Body of ex-Mayor's son retrieved from Sutlej River

By Our Staff Reporter

Eight days after the vehicle in which former Chennai Mayor Saidai Duraisamy's son Vetri Duraisamy (45) (resident of CIT 1st Main Road, CIT Nagar West, CIT Nagar) was travelling fell into the Sutlej River in Himachal Pradesh, his body was recovered on Feb. 12.

The accident took place on Feb. 4 near Kashang Nallah. Police said divers recovered the body around three kilometers downstream from the spot where the vehicle fell into the river.

The body was handed over to the family after postmortem. On Feb. 4, Vetri Duraisamy was travelling with a friend from Kaza in Lahaul-Spiti district towards Shimla in a vehicle which skidded off the road and rolled into the Sutlej River in Kinnaur district. There were three persons, in the vehicle.

The driver of the vehicle was killed as he was swept away in the river, while Vetri Duraisamy's friend identified, as Gopinath (32), sustained injuries in the accident.

Two days after the accident, Vetri's father Saidai Duraisamy had announced a reward of Rs. 1 crore to anyone who found his son.



Several roads relaid without milling



By Our Staff Reporter

A week after Chennai Corporation began a drive to relay around 500 battered roads, residents are complaining that the level of several stretches has gone higher than ground floor of houses.

Buildings in several areas including T. Nagar and West Mambalam are the worst-hit, and residents said the Chief Secretary's order of making milling mandatory before relaying roads is being violated with impunity.

For example, Veerasamy Street in T. Nagar has been relaid without proper milling. Milling is mostly done with earthmovers and not milling machines. Though roads are milled for 40mm depth, compacting is not done properly.

Experts said if roads are not compacted at higher temperatures, gravel does not get adequately pressed and the surface will turn uneven, resulting in level going up.

A senior Corporation official said, "some roads do not require milling and some roads require an increase in road level to create gradient and to ensure water flow. Not all roads can be milled in the same way, but the shortcomings will be addressed".

Following police complaint, gang ransacks biryani joint

A gang of men led by history-sheeter 'Bottle' Mani ransacked a biryani joint owned by R. Sathish (resident of CIT Nagar) on TTK Road in Alwarpet and stole Rs 27,000 cash at night on Feb. 14. Sathish recorded a video of the incident and shared it on social media.

The gang ransacked the joint in retaliation for the police complaint filed by Sathish against them for eating food in his hotel on Feb. 10 and refusing to pay for it.

The victim told the police that the gang members flashed knives and threatened him when he asked for payment for the food. Police said several cases are pending against Mani and he is out on bail. Police said that a search has been launched for the suspects, as they are absconding.

PSBB School wins choral music contests

By Our Staff Reporter

Teams from Padma Seshadri Bala Bhawan School (K.K. Nagar) won the 1st places in the junior and senior categories in the inter-school choral music competition conducted by Madras Youth Choir on Feb. 3 in Teach Auditorium (Taramani).

While Saraswathy Vidyalaya (Vadapalani) came 2nd in the senior category, team from Corporation Middle School (South Boag Road, T. Nagar) won a consolation prize in the junior category.

280 students from several schools in the city participated in the competitions.

The songs were on a range of subjects from environmental protection to national integration and in different languages. Eminent musicians like Vijayalakshmi Subramaniam, Bhushany Kalyanaraman and Vasanth Valli were the judges.

S. Ram (Secretary, Madras Youth Choir) said that the organisation aims at popularising the genre of Indian choral music through its performances and its teaching program for students and teachers.

"MYC spreads the messages of patriotism, human values, national integration and love for languages through its songs, following in the footsteps of its founder, late M.B. Srinivasan," he said.

He said prizes will be distributed among the winners on March 9, which is M.B. Srinivasan's Memorial Day.

Health camp for pet animals today morning

By Our Staff Reporter

Tamil Nadu Companion Animal and Veterinary Executive Welfare

Association (TNCAVE), which deals with pet animal issues and animal welfare, has sponsored a free health camp in Blue Cross of India (72, Velachery Road, Guindy) from 11 a.m to 1 p.m on Sunday, Feb. 18.

J. Radhakrishnan (Greater Chennai Corporation Commissioner) will be the Chief Guest. Dr. S. Chinny Krishna (Co-Founder and Chairman, Blue Cross of India) will be present.

Local teams excel in cricket tourney

Govt. Higher Secondary School (West Mambalam), PSBB School (K.K. Nagar) and Jawahar Vidyalaya (Ashok Nagar) have so far won all their matches in the TNCA City Schools U-14 tournament for the Somasundaram Cup going on since Feb. 12. The teams have qualified for the final round.

The tournament will conclude on Feb. 18. In its matches, PSBB (K.K. Nagar) beat KG High School by 6 runs and Shraddha Academy by 228 runs.

Govt Higher Secondary School beat Nellai Nadar School by 7 wickets and Ebenezer School by 53 runs.

Jawahar Vidyalaya beat National Public School by 9 wickets and FITJEE Global School by 283 runs.

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Metrowater expedites linking of pipeline from Chembarambakkam plant

The work to interconnect the second pipeline from the Chembarambakkam water treatment plant with the city's water distribution network along Poonamallee High Road has been accelerated.

The plant, which has the capacity to treat 530 million litres of water daily (mld), can be operated to its full capacity once the infrastructure is ready to distribute additional water.

Metrowater is working to bridge the gaps in the second pipeline that runs for 21 km from the plant to the existing network at Porur and Koyambedu.

The 2,000 mm diameter pipeline will be interconnected with branches for a distance of 1.75 km in different areas, such as Nazarethpet, Senneerkuppam and Poonamallee.

A press release said work would be executed on the stretch till Saveetha Dental College at a cost of Rs. 37.10 crores. Currently, nearly 265 mld of water is being distributed from the Chembarambakkam treatment plant.

Once the work is completed in seven months, city residents will get an additional 265 mld of drinking water.

Nearly 19.63 lakh residents of various zones, such as Anna Nagar, Adyar, Teynampet, Kodambakkam, and merged areas, such as Valasaravakkam, Ambattur and Alandur, will get sufficient drinking water.

The project faced various challenges, including the complex task of laying the pipeline at a depth of 6 feet from the ground level using the pipe jacking method.

The project, which was chalked out in 2013, was delayed due to several reasons, including the cancellation of the contract in 2019, a National Highway widening project and Metro Rail works.

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Upgradation work in progress at Mambalam Station



By Our Staff Reporter

Under the Amrit Bharath Station Scheme, Mambalam Station is being upgraded. A building to house a new booking office, lift for passengers and a permanent roof are under construction.

Due to the ongoing work, the newly constructed entrance has been temporarily closed since Jan. 27 and passengers have been advised to use the old entrance 100 meters away.

Woman sells Erukku leaves for Ratha Saptami

By Our Staff Reporter

On the occasion of Ratha Saptami on Feb. 16, which marks the birth of Lord Suryan, vendors were seen selling Erukku leaves.

Taking bath with Erukku leaves dipped in water is considered auspicious on Ratha Saptami day.

Photos taken on Feb. 15 shows an elderly woman selling Erukku leaves on Araya Gowda Road (West Mambalam).



Free Sundarakandam classes

By Our Staff Reporter

Gurukul Sloka Classes (West Mambalam) is conducting free online Sundarakandam recitation classes for elders.

The classes are conducted on Zoom application from 6.30 a.m to 7 a.m on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

There is no registration fee. It also conducts sloka classes on Vishnu Sahasranaamam, Ganesha Pancharatnam and Hanuman Chalisa for children and adults.

For details, call S. Sriram in 93825 13825.

Vasant Panchami celebrated with fervour

Bengalis in Chennai ushered in spring with Vasant Panchami on Feb. 14 by offering prayers to the deity Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, music, art and wisdom.

Prior to the festival, Madras Kali Bari (West Mambalam) witnessed artisans from Kolkata's traditional potters' quarter making clay idols of Saraswati.

It was the 26th year of Saraswati Puja in Kali Bari temple. Special lunch comprising Bhuni khichdi, mixed vegetables, tomato chutney, payesh (rice payasam) and sweets was served to the devotees after the pooja.

More than 1000 attended the special pooja to Devi Saraswati in Bengali Association (T. Nagar). There was annadhaanam following the pooja.



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Gaps in barricades unsafe for motorists



By Our Staff Reporter

Work to widen the storm water drain on Thambiah Road (West Mambalam) is in full swing. The road was one of the worst affected during floods in West Mambalam.

Photo taken on Feb. 15 shows workers laying the foundation for the drain.

As the road width has been reduced to half, frequent traffic jams are taking place during peak hours. Though barricades have been placed in front of the open trench to caution motorists, there are wide gaps between the barricades.

Nearby residents complained that it is unsafe for pedestrians and motorists as in case of accidents, someone can fall through the wide gaps into the trench and suffer grievous injuries.

They appealed to Chennai Corporation to provide enough barricades for the contractor to cover the openings.

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