

MYLAPORE

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Meet the resilient eyeglass retailers of Broadway

R SAI VENKATESH

At his eponymous opticals shop in Broadway, Palani is compelled to practise minimalism. A glass casing to display eyepieces and a lone chair behind it. A sliding door opens to a poky workshop that hoards a panoply of equipment and spares with which Palani plies his trade. Palani might be cooped up in a space that is barely three feet wide and a tad deeper than that, but he has a sense of expansiveness that comes from having captured his regulars' "mind space". It brings an invisible but undeniable dimension to his workspace and business. Palani is currently entertaining a customer from Thoothukudi, Mohammed Ali, who remarks that "my uncle referred me to this shop. He is a regular customer here."

This picture of minimalism and enterprise repeats itself through Prakasham Salai, Bakker Street (the spelling based on GCC's nameboard) and Francis Joseph Street which together account for around 400 opticals shops. These shops make up the opticals hub in Broadway. In almost every shop, eyepieces are sold at the front end, and lens are ground and chiselled to fit frames, at the back end. This versatility ensures this hub's relevance in a crowded market.

"Besides quick delivery of services, the rates are cheap. This is because anything related to opticals is available within these three streets," says Easwaran, who owns a service centre for optical items. "I can repair/tighten a frame in 10 minutes or less. In other places, customers will have

to wait more."

Anitha Davey's family has had a ringside view of how this market progressed from a handful of shops to the opticals hub that it is today. A third-generation entrepreneur of Davey Sons (established in 1970), Anitha elaborates: "My grandfather started this establishment. Then came Porwal and Bros, and subsequently a few others. There were a few scattered shops. Now every other shop is an optical shop here."

Safety in numbers

An increase in outlets has caused the market to be up to date with its technology. A good number of shops invest in automatic equipment for eye testing and glass cutting, says Jagadeesan of Sri Ayiengaran Opticians on Francis Joseph Street. He owns an optical lensometer and a set of cutters and grinders. "There are machines in the market for automatic grinding and polishing too, in the range of ₹2 lakh to ₹15 lakh," says Palani. Still, an equally high number of retailers rely on old ways and equipment to get the job done, Palani adds. Dr. Hisamuddin, an eye-care professional who has worked at Davey Sons for 15 years, puts things in perspective when he says an automatic setup never gets too cramped to accommodate human skill – a trained eye for details is always relevant. As a collective, the opticals shops in this hub offer a collage of modern technological advancement and old-world skill.

Style and substance

As with any other market, this hub has had to reflect the fads of every decade without flinching at



Francis Joseph Street, Bakker Street and Prakasham Salai constitute the opticals hub of Broadway.

PHOTOS: R. SAI VENKATESH



the thought. Palani notes that back then, the shape of the lenses mattered little. "Customers did not mind whether it was cat-eye glasses or round glasses. Now they do, demanding variety and we have to meet those demands." Anitha believes frames in the past had a greater lustre and was of

superior build, but she knows she has to suspend her judgement and cater to what buyers want.

Big opticals brands with their chain of outlets and attractive offers have weaned away a section of this hub's customers, says Ekambaram, another retailer on Bakker street. Lack of mass



advertisement strategies has a negative impact on the hub. But in a growing market, businesses such as those in this optical hub instinctively appreciate the power of personal connection.

Anitha nails it: "Some of our old customers bring their kids and grandkids and proudly tell them about us. Some of these regulars are from as faraway as the United States."

Is Mylapore the maavadu capital of Chennai?

RAJALAKSHMI V

The Chennai summer can be cruel, and it always lives up to that potential. In its defence, it makes amends for this cruelty with peace offerings. The first of those offerings is the raw mangos (maavadu), which descend in crates upon Mylapore. From the crates, they end up in bottles as mouthwatering maavadu pickle.

From a business point of view, Mylapore is arguably the maavadu capital of Chennai. When summer arrives with a knitted brow and a stern look, a bewildering varieties of raw mangoes pour into the streets of Mylapore mainly in South Mada Street.

Take your pick – Thirumoorthy Malai Vadu from Coimbatore; Madurai Azhagar Kovil vadu; Malai Vadu (double colour) from



PHOTO: RAJALAKSHMI V

Coimbatore; Salem Vadu; Kumbakonam Vadu; Avakai Mango; Gun-tur Raw Mango; Rasalu Raw Mango; Omelet Kaai (raw mango) and

Rumani.

At Mylapore, maavadu prices start at 300 per kg and increases according to the mango variety.

According to traders, this year's Maavadu sales seems set to trump last year's. These vendors also sell cut mangos, which makes the

pickle-making process much easier as they are cut to the right size and shape, and all one needs to do is add the correct proportion of the spices and oil to make a tasty pickle.

While Mylapore's maavadu sellers constitute one massive segment, the buyers constitute another. Buyers make up a diverse constituency. Broadly, there are two segments of buyers. Buyers who make maavadu pickle for themselves, their kin and friends. Buyers who make maavadu pickle for the shelves at food stores.

Across both segments, a premium is laid on quality maavadu. A majority of buyers on both ends of the spectrum are usually willing to pay a price that is a tad too high, for maavadu that packs a punch in terms of taste.

The maavadu season brings a flavour that Mylapore simply cannot resist.

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Luz shopkeepers driven into a corner

Though Metro Rail work has dramatically changed the contours of Luz Corner, many traders do not have the heart to turn their back on the area

LIFFY THOMAS

This is counter-intuitive. One can miss clutter when one's immediate surroundings have been suddenly rid of it. Luz Corner is now free of clutter, and it is not Luz Corner anymore.

The shops around the junction have dwindled. The feet that rush to these shops have thinned. Massive machines that swear allegiance to CMRL and its Metro Rail project are the defining feature of the landscape.

Long ago, when Metro Rail work was going on at Anna Salai, a majority of shop keepers shifted to other localities, here at Luz Corner this reporter finds shopkeepers that are in no mood to leave the area even though their business has taken a battering.

"I am glad we found a space just opposite the road as we were one of the early outlets that moved out when Metro Rail work started. Something is better than nothing," says a person managing the cash counter at RR Pharmacy.

A woman running a pavement shop selling fancy jewellery points to the mark made by the construction company to show their space has been designated for demolition, but till the last day she wants to make the most of what his stretch has given her family all these years.

Gani clothing store has three outlets in Luz, each of them equally impacted by the infrastructure work. One of the outlets will have to be closed for the next 10 days as a major drilling work is under way and the staff are staring at a pay cut on account of this development.

Voices about reinventing their business during tough times is strident among shopkeepers.

Just before Metro Rail work began, Noor Cut Pieces opened a You-Tube channel.

Liyaqath R. from the store says he has created a WhatsApp group with more than 60 regular shopkeepers as members. "A majority of our customers think we have shut shop or relocated from here, so it is important we communicate with them. We have started door delivery within a five-kilometre radius," says Liyaqath, adding that the shop has been in the locality for 20 years and they do not plan to move out. "These are tough times but you can't expect to find a shop after five years, so we will hold on, come what may," he adds.

A few metres away is Vijayalakshmi Enterprises, which sits next to Butterfly Home Appliances. Venkatraman D. hopes to continue working from the same locality till he can meet the educational expenses of his growing children. In the meantime, he has asked his customers to come in the evening



Waiting for shoppers.

hours, after 5 p.m., for any repair work as the traffic would not bother them at that time of day. "One grouse of customers is where to park, so I have requested that the customers be allowed to park their vehicles at a building next to mine," says Venkatraman, who has been in the business for over two

decades.

Girish P., the second generation owning Rex Fashions, says a WhatsApp group by the name "CMRL Mylapore/Mandaveli temp forum" was started to discuss issues concerning shops. The group has members of residents associations and shopkeepers as well.

While Girish agrees that shops have to get used to the changes happening around them, his request to CMRL is that they communicate with them regularly. "Almost every day, some new changes happen at the work site and we are caught unawares. Letting us know will allow us to pass on the information to our customers and be better prepared," he says. Currently, with the barricades firmly in place, only bikes and bicycles can squeeze their way through.

He says many traffic marshals do not know the area well to guide people. "We also want CMRL to ensure markings on passages and allow them to put signages of shops on the barricades," says Girish, adding that Rex has been in the locality since 1982.

"We too hope to continue from the same space but the going is tough," he adds.



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Taking new perspectives to the booth

Three first-time voters from R.A. Puram on what they expect from political parties and leaders

RAJALAKSHMI V.

'Present a report card regularly'

R. Sricharan, 21 years

It is important to me that I know the credentials of the person I am voting for. I will go through election affidavits to understand the qualifications and other details of the individual. I would also look up details posted by other contestants about a candidate, but will make sure not to blindly believe them but do my due diligence.

I want candidates who are voted to power to host a website that gives a report card of the work they are doing in their constituency. The platform must be interactive, allowing us to raise queries.

The elected representative should look into various issues that are prevailing in their constituency. For instance, flooding is a major issue in R.A. Puram. We have been asking that flood prevention walls be constructed



across the canals so that residential areas do not get flooded during heavy rains.

Young voters can play a key role in greater participation in the democracy and this requires them to be abreast of what is happening around them, involve in initiatives and help create awareness among the younger generation.



Teachers of Everwin School take part in a voter awareness programme. PHOTO : B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

'Use tech platforms'

Gomathy V., 20 years

I want all elected representatives to interact regularly with voters in their constituency through the year and not just before elections. With various tech platforms on tap, this is possible.

I gather much of my information about political parties and leaders through social media and they must use these platforms to showcase the work they do as well as get feedback from voters on changes they want in their area.

Better road infrastructure tops the list of what I want to see. Equally important are a good education system,



employment opportunities for youth and better healthcare facilities.

And I hope to see a higher percentage of young voters exercise their right to vote this election.

'Focus on climate change'

G Krishaant, 21 years

We digital natives are clued in about political parties and their manifestos, thanks to the campaigns through social media where we get much of our news. Elections are a point of discussion at home and among friends, the former are loyal to a party unlike my generation which looks at various other factors.

Recently, when I saw the manifestos of various political parties, I expected them to talk about empowering the LGBTQ+ community, spell out plans to fight climatic changes including rising pollution levels in cities, which was absent. I also want more young candidates in the fray as they would understand the needs of the youth better.



RESOURCES

Special buses ahead of voting day

The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation will ply special long-distance buses to enable people to travel to their hometowns to cast their vote in the Lok Sabha polls.

The buses will ply on April 17 and April 18 from four bus terminuses - Kalaingar Centenary Bus Terminus (KCBT), Kilambakkam; Madras Export Processing Zone bus terminus, Tambaram Sanatorium; CMBT, Koyambedu; and Madhavaram New Bus Terminus.

A release said more than 2,000 special buses will be operated on these two days, and around 3,060 buses will be operated from other cities and districts across the State.

After the polling, on April 20 and 21, in addition to regular services, which number

around 2,092 daily, more than 1,800 special buses will be operated to Chennai.

The public can book the tickets online through www.tnsta.in and on the official Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation app.

The passengers are advised to travel on April 16 and 17 and book the tickets in advance to avoid travelling on April 18 avoiding crowding in buses, said a release.

To know about bus routes and register complaints regarding services, the public can contact the following numbers - 94450 14450 and 94450 14436 (24X7).

For the safety of passengers, a control room will function round the clock on the premises of Kilambakkam and Koyambedu bus terminuses.

Helping voters prepare for the D-Day

Inclusive vehicle

Here is some help on getting to the polling booth. Vidya Sagar, an NGO working for persons with disabilities, runs an inclusive vehicle to help senior citizens and those with disabilities who may need a wheelchair as well.

The modified vehicle can accommodate three wheelchairs. The vehicle has to be booked at least a day in advance, and charges ₹ 25 per kilometre.

For bookings, call 9444398182

An App on the candidates

Arappor Iyakkam has launched an App to know the candidates from Tamil Nadu

who are contesting the Lok Sabha elections.

The App contains details such as assets, criminal records, education, occupation and income of all candidates. This can be downloaded from the Google Play store. The same details are also available on <https://elections.arappor.org/>

Find details about polling booths

Call 1950 for any voter-related queries. The helpline number will give information on the status of voter application, details on polling booths and other information.

Being 'homeless' and getting inked

A small group of voluntary organisations have taken up the challenging job of getting voter ID cards for those in shelter homes

LIFFY THOMAS

In the 2021 Assembly elections, 49 residents of Aadharavu Trust, a registered non-profit working with individuals with mental illness, got to exercise their political franchise.

A big achievement for members of the Trust as a majority of the residents are homeless and have no proper identity proof to make them eligible to apply for a voter's identification card.

D. Kotteswara Rao, founder and managing trustee of the Trust, says in such cases the local village officer has the power to tender a letter saying that such a person has been under the care of a home/shelter and must be allowed to apply for a voter's ID card.

But the process is far from easy.

Obtaining the necessary permission, contacting the personnel entrusted with the issue of voter card, facilitating the paperwork, and coordinating with the stakeholders makes the process challenging. NGOs working in this area say lethargy among local officials is another reason why only a small population of the homeless and mentally ill get their voter's ID card number.

Despite running behind officials for the last six months, Rao says he has not been successful in having this process initiated for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections.

"The Collector directed our representation to the district differently abled officer who in turn directed us to the tahsildar in-charge of elections," says Kotteswara Rao, who is assistant director, Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF).

He says 12 residents of the home run by the Trust might be able to vote in this election with the voter's card they already possess.

Many other private homes taking care of the destitute and mentally ill have similar stories to share.

Little Drops Public Charitable Trust, which has close to 1000 residents across its shelters in the city and outside, has been working towards getting Aadhar cards for its residents for more than six months.

"They want us to find the resi-

I have made a representation to the Election Commission many a time that they make provisions for having a polling booth at shelter homes



Representational image only

dents' roots. Our problem is that residents are referred to us through a police memo, so there is no way to find out their roots," says Edgar Jones Paul, co-founder, Little Drops.

Discrimination at booth

Mohammed Rafi, founder, Anbagam, a home for the mentally ill, has another issue. He says public hurl insults when residents of the home go out to vote. This election, there are at least 80 people who are eligible to vote.

"I have made a representation to the Election Commission many a time that they make provision for having a polling booth at the home," says Rafi.

After four months of a person's stay at Anbagam, the Aadhar process is initiated.

"Duplicate Aadhar cards are not issued, and we start the exercise early on for those who have no card and it is time-consuming and taxing," says Rafi.

Who decides whether a person with mental illness can vote?

The United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that persons with mental illness cannot be denied the right and the opportunity to vote. The law says that persons with mental illness can, unless declared to be of "unsound mind" by a competent court, exercise their constitutional right to vote. This holds good for

long-stay patients as well.

Decision-making skills

"A diagnosis of mental illness is neither necessary nor sufficient for finding of unsound mind" says a report by a team of mental health professionals associated with NIMHANS Institute and Hospital administration and Department of Psychiatry. The Institute had facilitated the process for the first time during the 2018 elections.

In 2019, the Institute of Mental Health in Kilpauk got its residents to exercise their right to vote. These residents had to undergo tests to assess their decision-making skills.

Those with very active psychotic

symptoms and those under custody were not allowed to vote.

That's not all. Once the persons who will exercise their vote are identified it is important to orient them about the election process and the candidates who are contesting the elections including giving a demo on how an EVM works.

"One also needs to understand that getting them a voter's id card will help them open a bank account, make them eligible for a disability pension and other government schemes. It is a bundle of happiness we are trying to send them with, when they leave the home as it will reduce the burden on the family," adds Kotteswara Rao of SCARF.

Promoting integration

Participation of the mentally-ill in elections promotes integration into the community, says a study titled 'Voting Rights for Psychiatric Patients: Compromise of the Integrity of Elections, or Empowerment and Integration into the Community?' brought out by a team of mental health professionals from Israel.

The relationship between schizophrenia

and decision-making capacity remains equivocal. In patients with schizophrenia, decision-making abilities might be affected by cognitive factors and/or psychopathologic factors, says the report. While psychotic symptoms fluctuate, cognitive deficits are generally stable over time.

There is presently no clear consensus on what capacities a person actually requires to

be able to vote, and many people with major cognitive impairments still have the right to vote in some countries, says the report.

The researchers – Adiel Doron, Tali Stolovy, Aya Secker-Einbinder, Alla Raba and Rena Kurs – found that the only countries that do not disenfranchise persons with a mental health or intellectual disability are Canada, Ireland, Israel, Italy and Sweden.

R.A. Puram residents want GCC to impound stray cattle regularly

RAJALAKSHMI V

Residents of Raja Annamalai Puram are raising a concern over what they see as a lack of will on the part of local authorities to bring cattle owners on the carpet for letting their bovines loose.

On the streets of RA Puram, stray cattle trigger disturbances that range from trampled gardens to traffic disruptions. This situation prompted Raja Annamalai Puram Residents Association (RAPRA) to call a meeting with cattle owners around a year ago. Despite the chiding, these owners are yet to effect any change in their bovines' workaday schedule – the cattle continue to beat about the streets of R.A. Puram through the day, and in some cases, into the night as well. RAPRA had to step in as there is no visible sign that Greater Chennai Corporation is impounding stray cattle and slapping the hefty stipulated fine on the owners.

At best, a sluggishly moving bovine on the road is an irritant to road users. At worst, it can cause a major road accident, having scuttled across the road. Thankfully in R.A. Puram, no major accident has been linked to stray cattle so far. But everything short of that has transpired,



PHOTO: RAJALAKSHMI V

according to residents.

On R.A. Puram Sixth Main Road, Deva, a grocer told this reporter that on one occasion, when his shop was unguarded, half-eaten fruits and vegetables were lying on the road in front of the shop. CCTV footage revealed two cows were behind the shop-lifting. The shop keeper notes that once successful with "pilfering", the cattle keep returning to the shop and put their luck to the test again. He added that when people feed

cattle, they return the next day thinking they will get food again, so the cattle should not take the blame in its entirety.

Residents also have stories of four-legged break-ins: stray cattle entering premises and rummaging through bins and making a mess of the place. The stray cattle do the same to the garbage bins on the streets, adding to the workload of the conservancy workers. Besides, stray cattle nibble at saplings. There have been cases of

stray cattle displaying aggressive behaviour.

Residents and shop owners want Corporation to tackle this issue by the horns, impounding stray cattle regularly so that cattle owners think twice before letting their bovines loose.

There have been cases of stray cattle displaying aggressive behaviour.

Diversion of MTC buses

Due to the ongoing metro rail work at Mandaveli and Mylapore regions, the Metropolitan Transport Corporation has diverted the services of routes number 21 (Broadway - Mandaveli), 21C (Broadway - Kannagi Nagar), 1 (Thiruvottiyur - Thiruvannmiyur) AI(Chennai Central - Thiruvannmiyur), and 1C and 1D (Ennore - Thiruvannmiyur).

Starting from Royapettah Police Station on Royapettah High Road, the buses till Adyar Music College will be diverted via Ajantha, Judge Jambulingam Street, VM Street, Thiruvalluvar statue, Luz Corner, Nageshwara Rao Park, Saint Mary's Road, Mandaveli MRTS railway station, Amma Unavagam and Rani Meyyammai School. Except on Judge Jambulingam Street, the MTC has facilitated halting points at all locations, a press release from the MTC said.

From Adyar Music College to Royapettah, the buses will ply through Narayanaswamy Thottam, Rani Meyyammai School, Devanathan Street, Mandaveli Market, Sai Baba Temple, Nageshwara Rao Park, Vivekananda College, Thiruvalluvar statue, AVM Kalyana Mandapam, Hotel Woodlands, Music Academy, Gowdia Mutt Road, and Royapettah Police Station.

The release added that halting points have been facilitated at all locations except on Gowdia Mutt Road.

Sewer work in Choolai necessitates traffic diversion

PRINCE FREDERICK

On its second leg, the sewer pipeline-laying work by Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board CMWSSB) in Choolai involves many carefully planned elements. At the junction of EVK Sampath Salai and Hunters Road, two machine holes are taking shape. Paces into EVK Sampath Salai, the road has been dug up for another.

Following the completion of sewer pipeline-laying on a section of Hunters Road, the work is now concentrated at the junction and would travel down EVK Sampath Salai and culminate near the fire station. That is the update about the CMWSSB exer-

cise as on April 12.

A CMWSSB official familiar with the work observes, "A pumping station is going to be constructed at EVK Sampath Salai, near the fire station. The sewer lines would be extended up to that point. The new pumping station would be the collection point for the sewage; from there, the sewage will be pumped to the Purasawalkam pumping station."

This exercise is aimed at refreshing the sewer network so that it is equal to the challenge arising from increased population in the area.

The CMWSSB official notes that besides the elaborate nature of the work, the extraneous challenges being brought to bear on it means it has to move at a

cautious and calculated pace.

He elaborates: "High-tension power cables run underneath the section, and therefore machines cannot be employed. Due to its complicated nature, the work cannot be undertaken at night."

On account of this activity, CMWSSB had sought a traffic diversion on this section. According to the CMWSSB official, a request has been placed with G1 Vepery Traffic Police to extend the duration of this diversion.

The diversion (as it played out on April 12) has vehicles being threaded through General Collins Road and Madrox Street to reach Vepery High Road. This circuitous route was necessary as EVK Sampath



Sewer pipeline-laying work at the junction of Hunters Road and EVK Sampath Salai in Choolai on April 12; and (below) the section of Hunters Road where work has been completed.

PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



Salai was out of bounds for vehicular movement, except for brief periods when the traffic police regulated the movement of motorcycles and autorickshaws through this road.

A traffic police personnel on the field remarked that these light vehicles are being allowed into EVK Sampath Salai as they can now pick their way through the constricted road. When the CMWSSB work cuts further into the road, this temporary measure would be dispensed with.

Better levelling will do the trick

The Hunters Road leg of the sewer pipeline-laying work by CMWSSB in Choolai has been done but not "dusted".

The portion where the pipeline has been laid is earthen, the trench having been filled with earth. With the model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha elections in place, Greater Chennai Corporation cannot move a finger now to correct this situation.

However, there is something that can be done to ease traffic movement on this section of Hunters Road.

The earthen patch can be levelled – as the CMWSSB-authorised workforce did the filling and levelling in the first place, the same set of workers can execute the work.

This group is still engaged in sewer pipeline-laying work which has now entered EVK Sampath Salai.

Aavin Parlour Park still latching on to its essence



LIFFY THOMAS

Dr Muthulakshmi Road Park – better known as ‘Aavin Parlour Park’ – in Adyar Circle has enjoyed patronage from people on the move. People are known to have a power nap, even a quick team meeting. The user experience for these people has irrevocably changed ever since Chennai Metro Rail Limited took over a part of

the park for work pertaining to its Phase 2 Corridor 3 Project. Recently, *The Hindu Downtown* visited this park to witness and record what the changes have done to the park, and if it holds on to its essential character. Giant machines were at work on one section of the park. Mounds of earth were piled up on another section. On this patch, greenery was totally missing. There is still a section that remains accessible to the general public. In fact, that section

is all that is left of the park. A team from Airtel had just concluded their meeting at the park, after which a few of them were seen taking a nap. That was a heartening sight.

“This is our go-to place for team meetings as it is centrally located and easily accessible to all of us,” said Mahendran M., sounding a tad disappointed that a part of the park has been lost on account of infrastructure work.

The Aavin parlour also gives the park its character. The staff at the Aavin parlour noted that there have been hints that the parlour would be moved, but there has been no official confirmation from CMRL about this.

A board at the entrance of the park mentions the name of Saivenkateshwara Contractors overseeing maintenance of the park for the period July 2023 to July 2024. A staff from the

contract company noted the major chunk of the work they did in the park came to a standstill a few months ago when Metro Rail parked its machinery there.

Walk a little further and there is a plaque paying tribute to Dr. Muthulakshmi, the first woman to hold a medical degree in India and the founder of Avvai Home. The park is named after her.

The park has also been an integral part of the neighbourhood. V. Anandi, a resident of the locality for five decades, recalls that the park was much larger and got reduced in its dimensions on account of road expansion work.

According to *The Hindu Archives*, the park is spread across an area of 16,800 sq. ft. and was renovated in 2008 to host new amenities including a cascade fountain.

Other parks

Thiru-Vi-Ka Park in Shenoy Nagar and May Day Park in Chintadripet are among green spaces in the city that were closed for public to facilitate Chennai Metro Rail work. They were subsequently restored.

Under the arrangement, CMRL is supposed to restore and hand over the public spaces it uses for its projects. Shenoy Nagar was out of bounds for the public in 2011, and the wait to see it restored was long. The park finally opened (in its restored form) in April, 2023.

Third Environment Montessori School celebrates first annual day

The Third Environment Montessori School celebrated its first annual day on March 25 at the Music Academy. Themed “Fauna Fiesta,” the event showcased the talent and creativity of the school’s young learners. Uma Shanker, director of the Indian Montessori Training Centre, was the chief guest.

While the pre-primary children charmed the audience with their adorable rendition of the “Bunny Hop” dance, primary students showcased their skills in “Animal Dance.” Parents joined their children in a heartwarming fashion show. In the finale dance, all the children came together to the catchy beats of the “Wake Up” song. The choreography was crafted by Manikandan Thirumurthy, said a release.

The school is at 11/20, Appu 2nd Street, Santhome. For details, call 9840076323.



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PLAN YOUR WEEK

Humour Club meets today

Humour Club International, Triplicane Chapter, will hold its monthly meeting on April 14 at 4 p.m. at TAG MFAC Hall (The Mylapore Fine Arts Club), Musiri Subramaniam Salai.

At the meeting, Mapilai Ganesh and his team will stage a play titled 'Ada Kadavule' by Sathya Sai Creations.

For details, contact B. Kannan at 98415 32212.

Ramanavami celebrations at BVB

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is celebrating Sri Ramanavami from April 15 to 17. Events will be held at the institution's main auditorium at East Mada Street in Mylapore. According to a press release, vocal concert, discourse, and instrumental music are part of the event.

Free course in Gita

ISKCON Chennai is conducting 'Gita Made Easy', a free online course in Bhagavad Gita, from April 8. The 20-day programme is offered in three modules and suitable for anyone interested in exploring the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita.

Recordings and materials from each session are available for download. For details, WhatsApp 9840229226 or visit studygita.com/gme/

Bootcamp conducted on World Health Day



BossGoRun Foundation recently conducted a bootcamp along with RunT-nagarRun to observe World Health Day.

According to a press release, the bootcamp witnessed enthusiastic participation from all age groups. Besides active participation in the fitness drill curated by fitness coach Ashok, some participants shared their inspiring and life-changing fitness journey, the release adds.

Many other participants promised a new start to their fitness journey on this World Health Day.

A brainchild of fitness coach Ashok, BossGoRun Foundation was started primarily to help people take up fitness as a priority, not a choice, the release adds.

READERS WRITE

Bank officials meet with residents and explain their position



Since Indian Bank started the work to build their quarters in Ramachandra Road, residents have had a few questions to ask. Several letters were sent to the Bank's chief and others. As a result of a sentiment expressed by residents, work was even stopped for a few days.

Recently, the officials organised a meeting with residents of this area for a better understanding of each other's concerns. Venkatramani of Indian Bank chaired the meeting. He said that

the work was in its final stages, and requested residents to bear with the disturbance on account of the work, for a fortnight.

All those who shared the grievances gave valuable ideas and they had promised to implement the same. The next review meeting is scheduled for April 20 in the same location and we all have requested that the bank officials ensure the project builder to send their representative.

*Baskar Seshadri
Mandaveli*



'Steel bench at bus shelter too high for comfort'

The metal seat at this bus stop opposite Nandanam metro station is not comfortable for commuters.
C.R. SAINATHAN, TIRUVALLIKENI

LIBA conducts 45th annual convocation ceremony

Loyola Institute of Business Administration (LIBA) conducted its 45th Annual Convocation Ceremony recently.

According to a press release, the ceremony was graced by the presence of Shobhana Ravi, president, Infotech, Innovation & Learning - TAFE, Rev. Antony Robinson SJ, rector, Loyola College and vice-chairperson, Board of Governors LIBA and Fr. C. Joe Arun, SJ, director - LIBA.

Two hundred and one graduands attended LIBA's forty-fifth convocation ceremony to receive their certificates.

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