

MYLAPORE

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SITTING IN STYLE ON 'LANDFILL WASTE'

The agency hired by Greater Chennai Corporation is expected to extend this initiative to the Kodungaiyur dumpyard **P4**



A GUTSY AND LONG INNINGS

Octogenarian M. S. Gurumurthy is the driving force behind Young Stars Cricket Association and the competition **P7**

A towering presence

Be our chronicler



It is the fag end of the year, a time to look back on the year that is ebbing away, and greet the one that is looking at us fresh-faced, a smile of optimism glittering in its eyes. At *The Hindu Downtown*, this sense of reflection and expectation is further amplified by the fact that the hyperlocal supplement crosses another milestone: it celebrates its twenty-sixth anniversary. On this occasion, it urges residents welfare associations across Chennai, many of which stand for the values *The Hindu Downtown* espouses and promotes, to chronicle their achievements in the year that went by and their expectations for the approaching year. The write-ups will be carried in the December 29 year-end issue. They can send the write-ups to downtownfeedback@thehindu.co.in



The playground at P.S. Higher Secondary School. PHOTOS: SRINATH M

Celebrated ground now wears a derelict look

M SRINATH

In Mylapore, P.S. Higher Secondary School ground was once synonymous with Blue Star cricket matches. Besides benefiting children of the school, it would draw cricket teams from far and wide during weekends. The school had taken the expansive ground on lease from Kapaleeswarar temple. The ground has now been acquired back by HR&CE.

It is being poorly maintained and following the recent downpours, it resembled a pond. The ground is overrun with tall grass. It has to be restored to its past glory.

Besides its functional role as a playground, it serves as a symbol of the past.

The Christmas Tree kept at Santhome Bascilla seems to be as tall as the steeples of the church. Measuring 30 feet in height, the tree was made to order. The height of the tree installed last year was 20 feet. Santa Stores erected the tree outside the church and the challenge before them was to make sure it weathered rain and other elements of nature.

PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



RAJALAKSHMI V.

Every Saturday, a group of theatre artists transform public parks and living rooms into rehearsal spaces, where lines are perfected and performances take shape. At the heart of this group is Simon Roy D.S., a 24-year-old who juggles a full-time job as an investment banker and his passion for acting, mime, screenwriting and direction. He leads Nadigan Daa, a two-year-old theatre group.

With over 20 core members, Nadigan Daa has working professionals and college students. The team stages plays, conducts workshops for theatre and mime enthusiasts, including training students at Stella Maris College. A memorable collaboration with the college was during International Women's Day 2024, where students of Social Work Department performed a street play for a self-help group.

"I was fascinated by mime from my middle-school days at St. Vincent's Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Aminjikarai, where we were encouraged a lot. Later, at Loyola College, I served as the cultural secretary of the Commerce Association from 2019 to 2020. During that time, I performed in over 100 theatre productions and helped secure 12 overall championships. After graduation, I wanted to create my own team to support small-time artistes like me, alongside my work as a judge for college events. That is how Nadigan Daa came to life," explains Simon.

Simon loves to be invited as judge for events as he gets to scout for new talent; some of them eventually join his group.

The plays staged by Nadigan Daa draw much of its inspiration from real life events and social issues, often using them as the foundation for the screenplays.

"One of my works, *Kalai*, was inspired by the multi-talented Jyothikalai, a differently-abled



Keeping it real

musician. It was a challenging project because it required extensive research to authentically portray a real-life story. I always strive for this level of authenticity in my work, as many of my stories are based on true events," says Simon.

Some of his well-known works include 'Confused Kadhal' and 'Payanigalin Kanivana Gavanathirku', the latter being a recent production. "Payanigalin Kanivana Gavanathirku was based on a personal experience when a friend left his keys in his vehicle. We panicked searching for them, only to find the keys right there in the bike. I wanted to write a story that captured that moment of chaos and realisation," he says.

Nadigan Daa performs charity shows at day-care centres and old-age homes. "We are not profit-driven," Simon says. "Most of us have full-time jobs and theatre

Ahead of his theatre group's play today in the city to raise funds for teachers from low-income schools, Simon Roy D.S. discusses the journey so far

is a passion for us. Not every member is available every weekend, so we practise with the available people, often using a dummy to fill in for missing actors. Our practice sessions start months before a show. In the days leading up to an event, we also make use of early morning practice slots. We do not have an office or studio, so rehearse in parks like Anna Nagar Tower Park or Bougainvillea Park, or even on our terraces."

Simon credits fellow theatre

artist Maya Krishnan for guiding him in shaping his work. "I have always been fascinated by Maya's performances, especially Kindhan Charithram," he says.

A particularly memorable moment for Simon came during a recent show, when an artiste from Bangalore, who had missed all the

During a rehearsal; and images from Payanigalin Kanivana Gavanathirku.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

practice sessions, managed to attend the performance despite arriving late and being ill. "It is a team effort where every member's contribution is crucial. From the draft of the storyline to the final show, it is all about the collective effort to capture the audience's attention," Simon recalls.

When asked what advice he would give to aspiring performing artists, Simon says, "Make sure you have financial stability through a paying job and pursue acting alongside it. The team you are part of also plays a major role in your success."

On December 22, Nadigan Daa, in collaboration with the Bhumi Foundation, will stage a play to raise funds for teachers from low-income schools, supporting their mental well-being.

The play is being staged at the Foundation's office in Alwarpet. For details, call 73582 18673



This stretch in RA Puram needs a speed breaker



The junction near Sangeetha Hotel on 3rd Cross Street is one busy road. To add to the chaos, the stretch lacks a speed breaker at this point and the zebra crossing is fading away.

Residents of the area have requested the E4 Traffic Police and GCC to look into these two concerns.

TEXT AND PHOTO: RAJALAKSHMI V.

Street music festival: grand finale at Thiruvanmiyur beach today



The street music festival highlights environmental issues.

Greater Chennai Corporation's (GCC) collaborative event with On the Streets of Chennai, a thriving music community, is in its second and final day. Awesome Weekend: Live Green, Love Blue (December 21-22), as the music festival is called, is aimed at addressing pressing environmental issues of the times.

The festival is set to culminate with a breathtaking grand finale at Thiruvanmiyur Beach on December 22, 2024, at 7.30 p.m.. Students from The Chennai School, under the administration of Greater Chennai Corporation, are set to perform a parade at the final showdown of the event.

Over the two days, the event seeks to celebrate urban greening and water conservation.

The festival has been designed to showcase 150 street music performances across the city, spanning over 150 hours, and transform Chennai's parks, beaches, streets, metro stations, and residential communities in-

to vibrant music hubs.

To complement the music, GCC has organised innovative, hands-on activities to inspire collective action for sustainability:

Hug a Tree: Participants hug a tree, post a photo on social media with @chennaicorp, and receive a certificate.

Sow a Seed, Sing a Song: Get seed balls from music bands, sow them in parks or lakes, sing a song, and tag @chennaicorp on social media.

Music for Chennai's Green Future: A call for music bands to compose original Tamil songs on the theme "Live Green, Love Blue." Winning compositions will be produced as an album.

Photo and Sketch Walk: Capture Chennai's natural beauty at Kotturpuram Park and MRC Pond through photography and sketches.

Eco-Themed Performances: Flash mobs and dance performances will be held to spread the festival's eco-conscious message.

Apartment Performances: Special musical acts in residential communities to promote rainwater harvesting and sustainable practices.

For more details, visit <https://www.chennaicorporation.gov.in/gcc/livgreen/love-blue.htm> or follow @chennaicorp on social media.

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Kannappar Thidal playground: a dream come true



T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

The decades-old dream of residents in Choolai, Periamet and Vepery came true recently when Chief Minister M. K. Stalin opened 'Kannappar Thidal' playground in Choolai through videoconferencing.

The sprawling ground is getting the finishing touch.

The ground has an indoor boxing arena, a badminton court, a football turf, pebble walkway and a range of other amenities.

"The ground was popular for boxing, cricket and football matches between 1968 and 1990. We want schools under Greater Chennai Corporation's watch and residents to make good use of the amenities at the ground once it is fully functional," says Siva Gunasekaran, a social activist and a long-time resident of Choolai.

For more than three decades, the ground was not used due to various reasons. It was after many representations including a battle in the Madras High Court and an RTI



Snapshots of the sports arena.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

reply that GCC decided to give the playground back to the residents (read box).

In December 2020, the civic body floated a tender for developing a new playground, but work started only after August 2021. The Hindu Downtown had highlighted the delay.

"As per an RTI query that I filed with GCC, the ground is nearly 2,20,000 square meters in size. The area along the ground's façade (OSR land), which comes under the

The long battle

- GCC recovers the land occupied by Chennai Moore Market Ice Fish Parcel Wholesale Dealers Welfare Association and fish vendors after a High Court ruling on April 24, 2003. However, construction materials stored in the place blocked public from using the ground.
- In 2008, GCC spruces up the playground with new facilities such as a gymnasium, a basketball court, gallery and a walker's track. While construction was in progress, the civic body closed the ground to construct a macro drain, which was completed after a long delay.
- In 2012, the civic body handed over the playground to Chennai Metro Rail Limited to park a cement concrete mixing plant and store construction materials; and later, to a contractor for parking a cement concrete mixing vehicle and storing construction materials to construct a bridge at Elephant Gate.
- In 2020, a proposal was drawn up to restore the playground.
- Solid Waste Management Department fenced and dug up a borewell and constructed a toilet for their purpose.
- Due to the construction of the bridge at Elephant Gate, this work was further delayed.

arena was occupied earlier by a shopping complex and civic body office," says Siva Gunasekaran.

"I have represented to the Regional Deputy Commissioner - North to convert the entire arena into a sports zone."

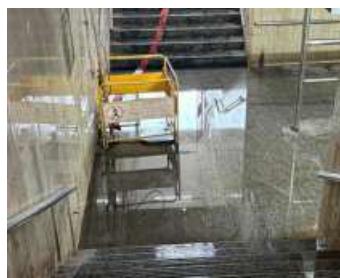
Pedestrians on a slippery path

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Beware of taking the slippery stairs at the pedestrian underpass on E.V. R. Periyar Salai in Park Town. Intermittent rains in the city and lack of maintenance make it a challenge for pedestrians to use this facility.

Some like S. Munirathnam are apprehensive about using the subway and crossing the road is another challenge.

"There is no pedestrian signal at Old Jail Road and Periyar Salai. Pedestrians are taking a risk as they cross the intersection amidst the traffic flow on Periyar Salai or run with the traffic flow from Old Jail Road towards George Town," he says.



Given the footfall the subway witnesses, the State Highway Department has to do more. Water can be seen dripping from the ceilings and walls.

M. Sakunthala, a pedestrian, says, "I visited the region a couple of weeks ago and the subway had stagnant water. I thought the problem would be fixed, but it has gone from bad to worse. How can

Water stagnation at the underpass; and the cracked ceiling.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



the authorities concerned expect the public to use the subway? No corrective action has been taken. Until the work is completed, the traffic police at the junction can help the pedestrians cross the stretch. The junction is along the subway."

Sitting in style on 'landfill waste'

The agency hired by Greater Chennai Corporation is expected to extend this initiative to the Kodungaiyur dumpyard



A display of furniture made from Perungudi dumpyard's legacy waste at the South Asia Summit 2024. PHOTO : B. VELANKANNI RAJ

LIFFY THOMAS

Sleek furniture out of garbage. That is a positive story from Perungudi dumpyard that was showcased when the South Asia Summit 2024 was conducted on the dumpyard near the Pallikarnai marshland. On display at the event were samples of chairs and tables that were made using landfill waste.

Nagesh Prabhu, co-founder, Zigma Global Environ Solutions, the private agencies that undertook the bio-mining project at Perungudi, says the samples showcased at the event served as a perfect example of how upcycling can be with products that cannot be recyclable.

The furniture was made using non-recyclable plastics lying in the dumpyard.

"We shred it, wash it and then it goes through an extrusion process to make such furniture," says Nagesh adding that the R&D plant for this project was in Coimbatore.

Elaborating on the products, Nagesh says, the furni-

ture does not look like it is made from recyclable material and can again be recycled.

"It ticks all boxes of sustainability and circular economy," he says.

Close to 96 acres of the dumpyard had been reclaimed following the processing of 1.73 million cubic metres of waste.

The contract with GCC at Perungudi dumpyard has ended but the company plans to continue making products from the Kodungaiyur dumpyard where it began its operation in September 2024.

"We will be spreading this initiative. We have not started a full-fledged plant but as our R&D was a success wherever we get a biomining project we can implement this," says Nagesh.

We will start rolling out new products as our contract with the Kodungaiyur dumpyard is on for the next three years.

We shred it, wash it and then it goes through an extrusion process to make such furniture

ENVIRONMENT

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

Kamarkat Srinivasan. That name would likely spark a glint of recognition in the eyes, if the reader is from Chennai, salivates over traditional healthy sweets, is a card-carrying follower of veganism and pops in at organic food markets.

With a surfeit of traditional sweets on his food enterprise Kottivakkam-based Marabhu Suvai's *carte du jour*, R. Srinivasan – to whom that sweet-sounding moniker (pun intended) belongs – offers something beyond the norm for the sweet tooth.

And he also offers a novelty to the hand that wields cutlery – spoons and ladles finely crafted from coconut shells. This pursuit has in fact, put his sweets-making business in the shade – in the shade of coconut trees. His enterprise, SN Crafts makes spoons, ladles and customised teapots with coconut shells allied with handles made of teak and pine wood. Surveying these products, one is left in no doubt about which element has star billing: it is the humble coconut shell, with all the other elements smugly content playing a supportive role to it.

If the reader has not made the connection yet, Kamarkat candy, typically made from the rich, fragrant flesh of the coconut, led Srinivasan to appreciate everything associated with *cocos nucifera*, even what would qualify as chaff. The coconut shells left behind after the meat is grated for making Kamarkat and other coconut-based sweets, caught his fancy.

For nearly five years now, he has devoted himself to upcycling these shells, giving them a fresh start, a second career in kitchens and cafes; and also a place in homes. The coconuts are cherry-picked, with only mature, organic country-breed coconuts chosen for the candy, leaving the shells to be repurposed for his ladles and spoons. On the supply chain are farmers from Papanickenpalayam in Coimbatore and Udu malpet in Tirupur, and at home, an organisation in Adyar with a sprawling campus dotted with 200 coconut trees.

Srinivasan's approach to sustainability, as exemplified by his enterprise, might hark back to the traditional homegrown wisdom of reusing and repurposing,



Kamarkat Sriniv and his team give out-of-work coconut shells a fresh new start in kitchens, cafes and restaurants



Sustainability in a nutshell



This section spotlights initiatives undertaken by residents of Chennai to minimise the waste that reaches landfills

but is driven by a fiercely modern sense of innovation.

Srinivasan's father-in-law, a skilled carpenter, was instrumental in helping him create customised machinery to carve the shapes of the ladles and spoons, blending traditional craftsmanship with modern innovation. Kamarkat Sriniv and his business partner Nagarajan Mani took it a couple of notches higher: spending one year in further customisation of the machinery.

The challenges
For Srinivasan, the production



A glimpse of the factory.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Surveying these products, one is left in no doubt about which element has star billing: it is the humble coconut shell, with all the other elements smugly content playing a supportive role to it

process is efficient when all materials, which include wooden teak handles for the ladles, copper or aluminium rivet and wire brush are readily available.

For example, making 50 ladles in just half a day becomes possible when all the materials are sourced from wholesale traders in Parrys, particularly Kandaswamy Koil Street. He also sources some of the materials from



Moore Market, which is a part of Chennai's circular economy. When they receive large orders – such as the maximum of 300 ladles – they can make them in just eight hours if all the materials are at hand.

Srinivasan used to source coconut shells from Nagarajan Rao until the latter was operating a business named Farmcoop in Mandaveli. Nagarajan who turned his back on selling coconut-based discards for recycling and upcycling, sheds light on the challenges faced by such businesses:

"We started collecting coconut shells during COVID-19, but practical issues, pests and lack of storage space made it difficult. With 100 to 300 houses involved, we could not find land for collection. Plus, not everyone had coconut shells to offer."

The lack of processing facilities in Chennai also hindered progress. "Without proper infrastructure, making the initiative sustainable became tough," he adds.

Nagarajan Rao hopes to make a comeback to the coconut-based sustainability business: "The dream is still alive, but it requires the right resources to thrive."



A *choir* and a voice factory rolled into one

PRINCE FREDERICK

CSI Redeemer Church Choir – Anna Nagar East is a voice factory with an overactive assembly line. Larynges are led through rites of passage. Brought in young, the larynges grow and the voices crack. Each of them is finally heard settling into a defined character.

On December 15, 2024, when the church's much-acknowledged carol concert hit the 30-year mark – as it presented 'Magnificat' – the ability to churn out voices at various stages of development was in full display. Multiple generations of voices made the line-up: the senior choir with those aged 20 and above; junior choir consisting of teenagers; and the kids choir straddling the 5-12 age bracket. It was a horde of voices, pummelled into order through a punishing practice schedule, one requiring a generous sacrifice of weekend hours.

With players of string and wind instruments thrown into the mix, it was a 115-member strong choir.

Immanuel Ponraj who has led those voices in all of those 30 years as its conductor, recalls, "In 1995 when we started, the choir had only 15 to 20 members." The choir in 1995 was wearing noticeably grey hair, a hairstyle drawn from a maximum of two generations. Last Sunday, the choir sported a range of hairstyles as encyclopaedic as the set of songs it presented. It took effort spanning decades to ensure that cross-section of coiffures.

The church introduced and perfected a system that guaran-

tees that no place in the choir falls vacant – well, silent. The system in fact pushes for the creation of additional places and voices.

"Many of the people have been in the choir for the last 30 years," says Immanuel. "Early on, we established a junior choir feeding them with songs tailor-made for them. They cannot relate to the songs the senior choir sang – and that is a recipe for drop-out scenarios. By providing them with songs that they were comfortable singing we got them interested in church music. In 2000, we started a kids choir, as many little ones were interested, certainly with some nudging from parents who came to us with a request. The kids graduate from one choir to another and that is how we managed to maintain more than a full number of choristers despite considerable migration happening on account of relocation due to marriage and work. One can see many youngsters in this choir which is a rare thing."

Efforts are put in to ensure a

▼
Carol concert by the choir of CSI Redeemer Church - Anna Nagar East on December 15, 2024. This year's carol concert marks the choir's thirtieth.
PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

matching diversity on the other side of the church – that is, in the pews occupied by the listening congregants.

"Usually, we have something for every ear – classical music, contemporary songs, regular Christmas songs, new arrangements and for variety, we throw in Tamil songs into the mix," Immanuel explains.

A rather tight practice schedule and regular performances on the big stage make this choir singing-fit at any given time.

"Every Sunday, we sing a special song at the church at the 7 a.m. English service. Based on the theme of the week, we take a song, prepare it and sing it," says the conductor. It is Net practice for the big day in December.

"This is one of the reasons we have been able to sustain the

choir. Every Saturday we meet and have practice sessions at different times for kids, junior and senior choirs. In addition to the Christmas carol concert, a Good Friday concert that we perform has people from outside flocking to our church. For the Good Friday concert, we start practice from the end of January," elaborates Immanuel, adding that he conducts these choir practice sessions assisted by pianist Hannah Jane. The string and wind instruments add grandeur to the choral presentation and not all the talent in the orchestra is in-house.

"Those playing the strings are all professionals. Many of them have associated with the Christmas concert for 18 years. They are paid a small amount, and it is a church event, they are willing to play for this modest pay. Players of wind instruments belong to various churches; they join us to help us out."

Immanuel notes that in terms of choral singing, the church has been playing on a comfortable wicket from day one.

"The church is 55 years old, and from day one, we have had a decent choir. Arthur Muthiah started it 55 years ago and then different hands came in," says Immanuel.

From the performance on December 15, it is evident each hand has played well the cards it has been dealt.



War of DJs 2024 held at lounge in Thoraipakkam



War of DJs 2024 – Epic Night was conducted at Zebra Crossing Lounge in Thoraipakkam recently by Chiropeta Events.

In a competition that showcased an array of talented DJs, DJ Loki emerged as the ultimate winner, captivating the crowd with a power-packed set that had everyone on their feet. His seamless transitions and energy-infused beats created an exhilarating ambience, showcasing his prowess in blending different genres.

The audience responded enthusiastically, highlighting his ability to read the crowd and maintain a high level of engagement throughout his performance, says a press release.

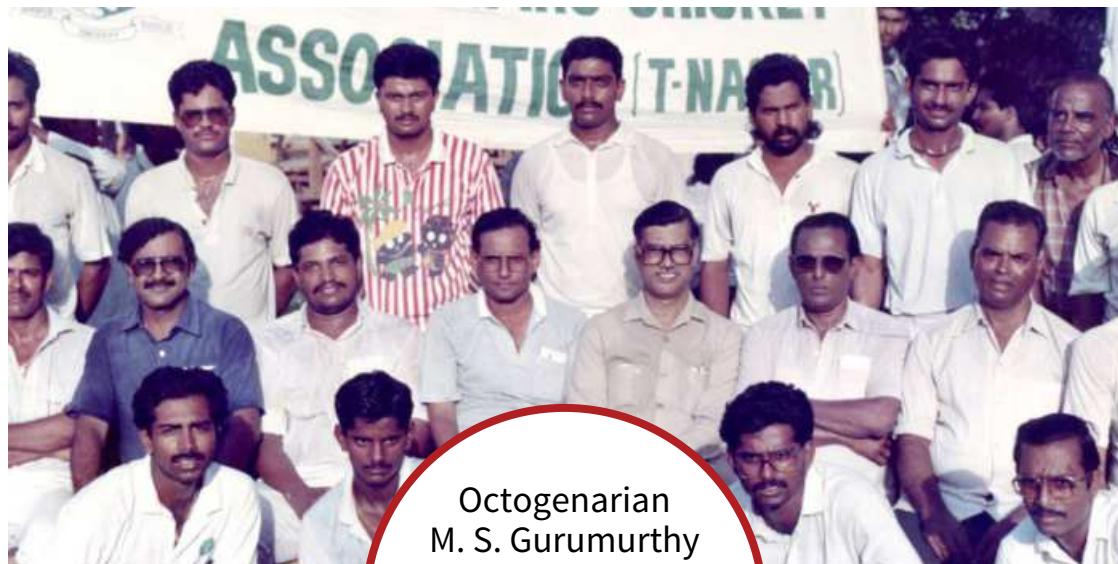
Runner-up DJ Desmo impressed attendees with his professional track selection and meticulous mixing skills. His commitment to delivering an immersive auditory experience was evident, as he expertly crafted a set that resonated with both seasoned fans and newcomers. The precision in his mixing and the overall flow of his performance solidified his reputation as a serious contender in the competitive DJ scene, the release adds.

Also deserving recognition was DJ Vasantha (Runner up), who entertained the crowd with a lineup of popular commercial tracks. His impressive technical skills and smooth mixing not only kept the audience engaged but also created an infectious energy that had everyone dancing. The positive reception to his set demonstrated his understanding of the audience's tastes and preferences, making him a crowd favourite.

DJ Sam rounded out the evening, showcasing a diverse range of tracks that appealed to all. His ability to mix various styles seamlessly allowed the crowd to experience a little bit of everything, maintaining a laid-back yet festive atmosphere.

The camaraderie among the DJs and the exhilarating performances turned the event into a night to remember. Other finalists DJ Raan, DJ Kash, DJ KL did an amazing job and deserves applauds, special thanks is due to DJ Elvin, DJ Ashish Nagpal and DJ Raw Z for being amazing judges for the event, the release says.

A gutsy and long innings



TARUN SHAstry

Octogenarian M. S. Gurumurthy is the driving force behind Young Stars Cricket Association and the competition

All these players have competed in the Young Stars Cricket Association (YSCA) Trophy, a tournament that began way back in 1970. It has

been held for 54 years (barring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

Octogenarian M. S. Gurumurthy is the driving force behind YSCA as well as the competition. He has devoted a significant portion of his life to assisting young people in realising their aspiration of turning professional cricketers.

"We started the YSCA tournament back in 1970. There was no



From the *The Hindu Archives*; and (right) YSCA skipper V. Naveenkumar receives the G.R. Kuppuswamy memorial trophy from former India player Hemang Badani.; M.S. Gurumurthy is on the left.

private competition at that time. The growing interest in cricket helped the YSCA Trophy become popular. There are quite a few top players from the country who have been part of the YSCA journey. This is the only private tournament to be recognised by the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association," Gurumurthy told *The Hindu*.

On conducting tours for the YSCA students, Gurumurthy said, "I wanted the boys to gain exposure and raise their game. Just because they train in the nets every day doesn't mean their game has im-

proved. The more matches they play, the better for their progress. That's why we started organising tours as they would help them gain match awareness." Incidentally, the boys had gone on a tour of Kerala recently.

"I want to thank the TNCA for the big support in helping me conduct the YSCA Trophy and also the tours. The TNCA's encouragement has been immense in our journey," said Gurumurthy. Given his passion and commitment to the game, there is no doubt that the YSCA flame will keep burning for years to come.

Rotaract Club of Stella Maris brings joy to specially abled children



The Rotaract Club of Stella Maris College organised Project Prathibha'24, a cultural extravaganza for specially abled children, under the guidance of faculty coordinators Evangel Aazhima and Indumathi.

The event was led by president Lincy Catherine, secretary Ashley Rose and chairpersons Pavithra, Nancy Thomas and Aro Nisticca, with seamless

coordination by board members and volunteers, says a press release.

The event was inaugurated by Rtn. Muthu P., president of the Rotary Club of Madras East, as the chief guest, and Rtr. Sasi Kumar, District Rotaract Representative of RID 3234, as the guest of honour.

The participants hailed from prominent institutions, including MGR Home & Higher Seco-

nary School for the Speech & Hearing Impaired, The Clarke School for Children with Special Needs, and Avvai Kapagam, the release notes.

Project Prathibha'24 featured a variety of on-stage and off-stage events designed to showcase the children's creativity and enthusiasm – Soulful Echoes (Group Singing); Dance Your Heart Out (Group Dance); Craft Corner (Art & Craft); Sketching Smiles (Drawing) and Walk the Dream (Fancy Dress).

The highlight of the day was Walk the Dream, where children dressed in colourful costumes, portraying their dreams, favourite characters, and creative ideas. Every participant was awarded a medal and a certificate, ensuring all children felt equally valued and appreciated for their efforts, the release adds.

Workshop on using AI to revive Tamil manuscripts

A lecture on using AI to revive Tamil palm leaf manuscripts and the ancient Tamil music system will be held on December 23 at Roja Muthiah Research Library in Taramani. According to a press release, Balamurugan V T, professor and head of the Tamil Technology Research Centre, will handle the session.



Session on road safety at school

A road safety awareness programme was held at Chettinad Vidyashram at Raja Annamalaiapuram. According to a press release, M. Syed Faizer, Traffic Warden, The Tamil Nadu Police Traffic Warden Organisation (TPTWO), presided over the event and explained various aspects of road safety.

Fostering the spirit of creativity

Vruksha Montessori School recently held its annual open day, which focused on the five elements of nature. Students presented topics that combined subjects such as Mathematics and English with the theme. Founded in 2002, the school follows the Montessori method at Pre-Primary and Primary levels and the Cambridge curriculum in high school. The school encourages children to work independently, using materials to understand concepts at their own pace.

Eight-day drama festival from December 25

Dummies Drama, a Tamil theatre troupe, in association with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan - Chennai Kendra is presenting an eight-day drama festival from December 25 to January 1 at Bhavan's Rajaji Vidyashram School in Kilpauk. Time: At 7 p.m. Entry is free, says a press release. For details, call 9381422271.

The troupe which completed its silver jubilee in 2023 was founded by Sreevathson V, R Giridharan, and G Krishnamurthy. It has more than 50 productions to its credit which is spread across a variety of genres such as science and technology, docudramas, philosophy, comedy and family dramas. Some of its unique productions are *Prathibimbam*, a political thriller based on the Indo-China relationship; *Vaidyashala*, a play set in medical industry, *Valai*, a corporate espionage thriller; and *Hanuman*, a story set in ISRO.

For details, call 93814 22271.

Rotary Club unveils tower clock at school in Egmore

Rotary Club of Madras T. Nagar unveiled a tower clock at Don Bosco Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Egmore. According to a press release, the tower is a symbol of Rotary's commitment to community service. The clock is installed at the main gate so that it is visible to the general public.

Mahaveer Bothra, district governor of Rotary International District 3233, took part in the event, adds the press release.

Founders Day celebrated

Be Well Founders Day, led by Dr. C.J. Vetrievel, celebrated unity and social welfare with impactful events: tree plantation at Dr. Natesan Park with dignitaries, a free health camp and lunch at Charu Old Age Home, a blood donation camp with VHS Blood Centre, and essential item distribution to underprivileged families, says a press release.

Be Well Hospitals, established in 2011, delivers affordable, quality healthcare across 12 locations. Learn more at www.bewellhospitals.in.

Collection drive for people affected by Cyclone Fengal

It is the season of giving and sharing and in keeping with this spirit, The Little Caterpillar in partnership with Goonj is organising a collection drive.

One can drop clothes, vessels and toys that will be sent to people affected by Cyclone Fengal. Dry ration, gently used clothes, new undergarments, blankets, house-

hold essentials and hygiene products are some of the items urgently required, said a press release.

The collection centre is open till December 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Little Caterpillar is at # 66, Karpagam Avenue, 2nd Main Road, R A Puram. For details, call 72003 24361/ 92661 30020

EFI hosts kutcheri at Besant Nagar

The Environment Foundation of India invites music enthusiasts and audiences to celebrate Margazhi at their office in Sri Shankara, 31st Cross Street, Besant Nagar. The initiative began on December 16 and will run till January 16, every Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and is open to all artistes and music lovers. The initiative aims to promote environment-themed music. For details, call 8925858068.

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