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Newly formed team to revive century-old school

As "Dhadi Vadyar School" in Mylapore gears up to celebrate its centenary year, a collective comprising residents of the neighbourhood and alumni are pulling out all the stops to restore it to its past glory



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Tucked inside a narrow lane at Mangolai in Mylapore, Sree Karpagavalli Vidhyalaya Middle School would easily go unnoticed amidst a mushroom of institutions in the area. This year, a new school management is trying to make some noise for an institution that has imparted life skills to generations of students.

This Tamil medium government-aided school that is gearing up to celebrate its centenary year from the coming academic year is on a revival path.

Six young like-minded individuals, a majority off them from the neighbourhood, recently took over as the trustees of Chandra Ammal Educational and Charitable Trust, which runs this institution well-known among old timers as "Dhadi Vadyar School" as the founder K.V. Dharma Raja Iyer always spotted a long beard.

None of the trustees (R. Shivakumar, Harsha Vardhana R., U.R. Sriram Shankar, Sripriya Anand, Yamuna Harsha Vardhana and Prabhu) are alumni of the school but come with varied experience and a common goal of keeping an institution going for what it gave the neighbourhood.

In this mission, the trustees have reached out to alumni and the community around to support them.

Poor enrolment rate is one of the big challenges the institution faces. From 700 students during its hey day, today the strength of the

Maths as USP

Mathematics teaching was the USP of this school. Old students who graduated from the institution say they learnt to calculate without a calculator. The quality of students who left the school after Class V was so good that they automatically got admission into PS High School or Lady Sivaswami Ayyar Girls Higher Secondary School. Prominent citizens who studied in the school include Late M.G.C. Leelavathi, niece of former Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran; Late Cho S. Ramaswamy, editor, Thuglak, and Sir Mohammed Usman's grandsons.

school has trickled down to a single digit number.

"We are trying to analyse the reason for this drastic decline. Is it because parents want English medium education or the Right to Education has made it possible for students to get admission in private schools?" asks R. Shivakumar, secretary, correspondent and trustee.

The team is trying to find a solution to improve the approach road to the school.

"The school is situated inside a slum called Mangolai where the approach road is so narrow that one can only come on a bicycle or a two-wheeler. We are planning to touch base with Kapaleeshwarar temple management, which owns

▼ During the recent Republic Day celebration at Sree Karpagavalli Vidhyalaya Middle School.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



the 3.5 ground land, to give an alternative exit for the school," says Shivakumar, a healthcare professional.

Since the inception of the school in 1926, breakfast and lunch are served to the students funded by the management. The current team continues to follow that practice. A website to connect old students is on the cards.

To get more girl students to join the school, the team will be introducing the Central government's Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme, where 50 girl students will get ₹ 10,000 on completing middle school.

The school has had different managements heading it and given the demand for quality education, the team has an arduous task in hand to revive its past glory.

"We have had talks with the PS School management to see like the past if our students on completing middle school will be given admission," says Sridharan S, trustee and educationist who is guiding the new team to take over. Introducing English medium classes is also in discussion, he says.

Sriram Shankar, trustee and a chartered accountant who has worked on various mergers and acquisitions, feels there is always continuity for an institution that has survived for 100 years.

"I see great value from a "social capital" point of view, and with this assignment we are looking at turning this school around," says Sriram, whose strength includes fundraising and liaising with other stakeholders.

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

K.R. Jambunathan, old student and long-time resident of Mylapore

The school was strict yet they showered so much affection on us. We could not enter the classroom with our slippers as it was considered a temple of learning. Those who could not recite the maths fraction would get rapped on their knuckles.

For the recent *Mylapore Times* festival, we had a model of a school where I spoke how "Dhadi Vadyar School" contributed to the neighbourhood.

As a resident of the neighbourhood for 70 years, I will be helping them connect with old students. We are planning to go on a door-to-door campaign in two to three slums around and get students.

M.S. Sundara Rajan, former chairman and managing director of Indian Bank, who is leading the alumni group

My house was next to the school. As I was a naughty kid my parents admitted me here when I four years old itself. From 1955 to 59, my foundation was laid at this patshalla. I remember 20 marks was assigned for mental maths and so well was the foundation laid that one will be able to multiply fast without a calculator.

We just started the WhatsApp group with 23 old students. The plan is to multiply it in the coming months. We plan to find and include other students who graduated from this middle school. Once we have a good strength, we can brainstorm on how to contribute to the school.

MANGALA HERITAGE

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The genesis of a close-knit group

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A report in *The Hindu* dated November 5, 1925, gives an account of a recently held meeting that would witness the birth of a group that would prove in the years to come, to be a close-knit, ever-growing community. It is a community that has thrived on nostalgia fuelled by a shared educational heritage.

Rev. Father A.S. Ville Verde,

principal of St. Bede's High School presiding over it, the meeting formalised the idea of Old Bedeans' Association (OBA) with old boys of the school packing the "spacious school hall" to the rafters.

What transpired in the meeting seems, on hindsight, to be indicative of the character OBA would develop and nurture – a fraternal attitude towards current students of the school, one that would result in their and their institution's growth. If one parsed through the contents

▼ During the school's centenary celebration

of the meeting, OBA's formation was geared to meeting an immediate need and a direction the principal wanted the institution to take.

In alignment with the goal of being more residential, the school was in the process of building a new hostel, one that would accommodate 120 boarders.

The principal appealed to the old boys to use their influence to get more boys, especially boarders, as it was the residential part of St. Bede's he was endeavouring to develop.

The report goes on to state: "The object of the meeting having been explained, it was resolved to form an Old Bedeans' Association. The Rev. Father Frank Williamson, an old boy of the school was elected unanimously the first president of the Association amidst loud applause. Mr. M. D'Cruz was elected secretary."

A report (dated April 10, 1934) of the annual prize distribution function at the school notes that the Old Bedeans' Association "subscribed ₹500 to form the nucleus of the School Jubilee Endowment Fund."

In its edition dated December 25, 1935, *The Hindu* published a pithy announcement of an initiative by OBA to cement the bonds among the old boys – the launch of a quarterly magazine, *The Bedean*.

The first issue of *The Bedean* seeing the light, the report noted: "The journal is well got-up and is bound to serve as a visible link between the old and new Bedeans."

Celebration time for old Bedeans

The Old Bedeans Association, the alumni of St. Bedes Anglo-Indian Higher Secondary School, Santhome celebrated 100 years since the formation of its Old Boys Association in 1924-1925.

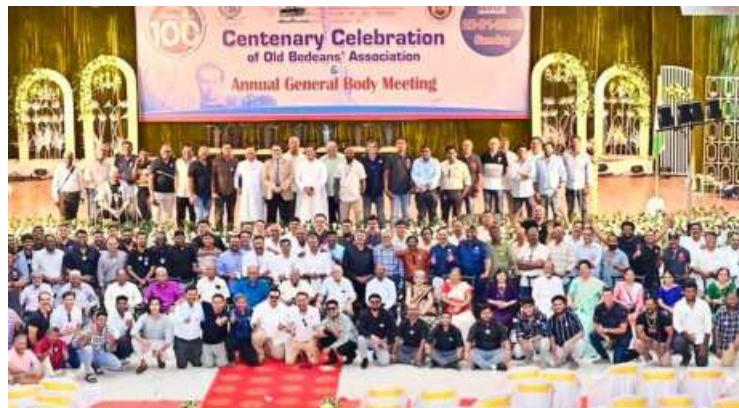
The occasion was marked with grandeur the school prestigious Centenary Auditorium. The chief guest for the occasion was one of its own Old Bedean (1970 Batch) Antony Lobo, Honorary Consul General of the Kingdom of Spain and the Head of Consulate in Chennai.

Justice Mohammed Shaffiq (Madras High Court), Dr. Edwin Fernando (Stanley Hospital), Dr. K.P. Kosygan (Apollo Hospital), Dr. K. Ganapathy (Retd Apollo Hospital) and actor George Antony (all old Bedeans) were present.

The national president of the Past Pupils of Don Bosco School J. Satish, the Province Delegate Rev. Fr. K.J. Arulraj, Province President, Secretary and committee Members, the Presidents of the Don Bosco Schools in Chennai also graced the occasion.

The occasion was blessed with the presence of the former Rectors, Headmasters, Asst. Headmasters, Teaching and non-Teaching staff, the present staff of the institution and over 700 old boys from all parts of India, USA, Australia, Malaysia, Germany, Canada, UK, Philippines, Singapore.

Rev. Fr. D.J. Sagayaraj (Rector and Correspondent), Rev. Fr. Y.L. Irudayaraj (Headmaster), V. Kumaresan (President, OBA) and his team deserve a special word of appreciation for organising the same, the press release adds.



Gopalapuram playground: high mast lamps sought



As the shadows balloon out across the Gopalapuram playground on Conron Smith road, the floodlights blink into wakefulness. With the sun leaving its post, these floodlights have to stand in for the orb. The cricket-playing groups however rush through their matches, fighting shy of placing their bets on the artificial lighting. The grounds would be open until 8 p.m., but they note that the optimal playing conditions would begin to take a nosedive after 6 p.m. Batting and fielding take on the character of blind man's buff, as the 11 posts with their lamps do not hold their own against the encircling darkness.

"Sighting the ball gets tricky after 6 p.m.," says one, the statement greeted with a chorus of agreement. Habitués of the ground seek high-mast lamps and are mystified this ground has been denied that advantage despite its central location and huge patronage. The Trustpuram playground has two high-mast lamps, each placed in a manner that brings much of the ground under sufficient illumination. The Gopalapuram ground attracts a good number of people who have the time to free their arms and swing a cricket bat only after 6 p.m., and poor illumination makes their post-vesper cricket experience less engaging. When *The Hindu* Downtown visited the playground on January 30, 2025, there was Eshwar, on his step-through bike, a huge vessel on the landing board, his legs clamping it in place. A resident of Mylapore, he had delivered snacks to a customer nearby, and stopped by for a game of cricket. Poor illumination does not help the cause of the Eshwars who have only the evening to snatch some free time for cricket. Photos: Prince Frederick





The buildings of the gurukula at Chintadripet



A gurukula standing in the shadows in Chintadripet

JACOB B. JACOB

On a winding backstreet alley in Chintadripet, a forlorn building embodies the history of philosophical quest, the vestiges of community living. At one time, it had doubled as a study hall, community centre; and even a wedding venue.

Today, the gurukula building stands quietly in memory of Swami Charles Chaitanya - its resident guru from 1979 until his demise in 2021. Now, its maintenance has fallen on his disciples, who from time to time, come together and conduct prayer sessions.

The parcel of land on which the building is located is believed to have been donated to the Narayana Gurukula, an institution formed in

honour of philosopher and social reformer Narayana Guru. Over the years, this gurukula building in Chintadripet underwent significant infrastructural changes: from a palm leaf-thatched structure to a tin-roofed shed, it acquired a structure born out of well-ordered construction methods.

In 2017, Charles's disciples pooled in money to build a new residence for him beside the existing building. However, the construction work stretched on until 2022 due to shortage of funds. Charles was not fortunate enough to spend at least a day in the new building.

Following his demise, the gurukula is being run by his disciples. "His (Charles's) presence is irreplaceable," says a person who resides in the locality.

The neighbourhood cherishes

fond memories of the gurukula as several community events and wedding ceremonies were organised on its premises.

"One way or the other, all of us have been associated with this institution. It is special for us because no such institution is located in this cramped neighbourhood of ours," she says.

Previously, Charles was residing in the sprawling gurukula at Fernhill, Ooty. In 1979, Guru Nitya Chaithanya Yati, the second successor of Narayana Guru, delegated him to Chintadripet to look after the gurukula building.

I conduct yoga sessions and do a bit of cleaning work too

"Charles's days in Chintadripet, particularly the initial period, were beset with difficulties since it was a struggle to secure funds," recalls a long-time associate of the gurukula. He pays a visit to the place at least twice every month.

"The urn with his (Charles's) holy ashes is preserved in the new building. So, whenever I can, I take time out of my work to come here and chant some prayers. I even carry out some yoga sessions and do a bit of cleaning work too," he says.

Throughout his stay in Chintadripet, Charles had to put up with the bare minimum within the confines of a tin-roofed, tumbledown structure amid tall trees.

As mentioned in 'The White Cloud', the biography of Charles authored by Professor Anand, the "dilapidated gurukula building" by the Cooum at Chintadripet was discarded by others because of its "poor condition".

A social initiative
The exact date of establishment of the gurukula building in Chintadripet is contended among the disciples. Some hold that it was established in the 1920s by P. Natarajan, a.k.a. Nataraja Guru, the late disciple of Narayana Guru, for the benefit of those students to

whom education was still a far-fetched dream.

"It was in the year 1920, when I had not yet finished college, that I used to go to teach after eight at night in a certain area, which could be called a slum, of the city of Madras," writes the late philosopher in his autobiography--.

Chintadripet is referred to here, on the fringes of which Natarajan - only a college-going youth back then - made acquaintance with members of the Advaita Bhakta Sabha, a socio-religious organisation formed by Kalathoor Muniswami Pillay.

Falling short of funds to undertake social activities, the sabha, at the behest of Natarajan, pooled in money received from a play about the life of Nandanar, a saint. But they were still strapped for cash to support the night-school that was started for the students of the community. A building to undertake classes was the need of the moment then.

At this juncture, they sought the assistance of Narayana Guru, who readily arranged for a parcel of land close to the Cooum.

It consisted of a few cents, sufficient to accommodate at least five students at a time. And so, the structure came into being.

Dance performance combines art and devotion



Shruthi Shoby, a renowned Mohiniyattom artist with 25 years of experience, presented "Namami Narayananam" at Bhavans Natyostav Margazhi 2025. This themed production, scripted for Guruvariyur Devasom Kshetrotsavam, made its Chennai debut, leaving the audience spellbound and mesmerised, said a release.

The production showcased the power of art and devotion.

The performers, her disciples, including Darsana Pradeep, Aswathy Raj, Shwetha Madhan, Kumari Ardra, Kumari Kavya and Kumari Sushama, complemented each other perfectly, added the release.

The music, composed by Thrissur Krishnakumar, with lyrics by Kalamandalam Ganeshan Master, the background score and rhythm by Nagarajan, vocal by Sudev Warrier, violin by Anand Lal, flute by Mohan, and edakka by Thrissur Krishnakumar, all came together to create a rich and immersive experience.

Shruthi is director of Srishti School of Classical Dance, with institutions in Anna Nagar and a branch in Vanagaram, Under the direct tutelage of Kalamandalam Kavitha Krishnakumar in Mohiniyattom, Shruthi has honed her craft, and her institutions offer training in various classical dance forms, including Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, and Carnatic vocal.

An educational visit to Pammal

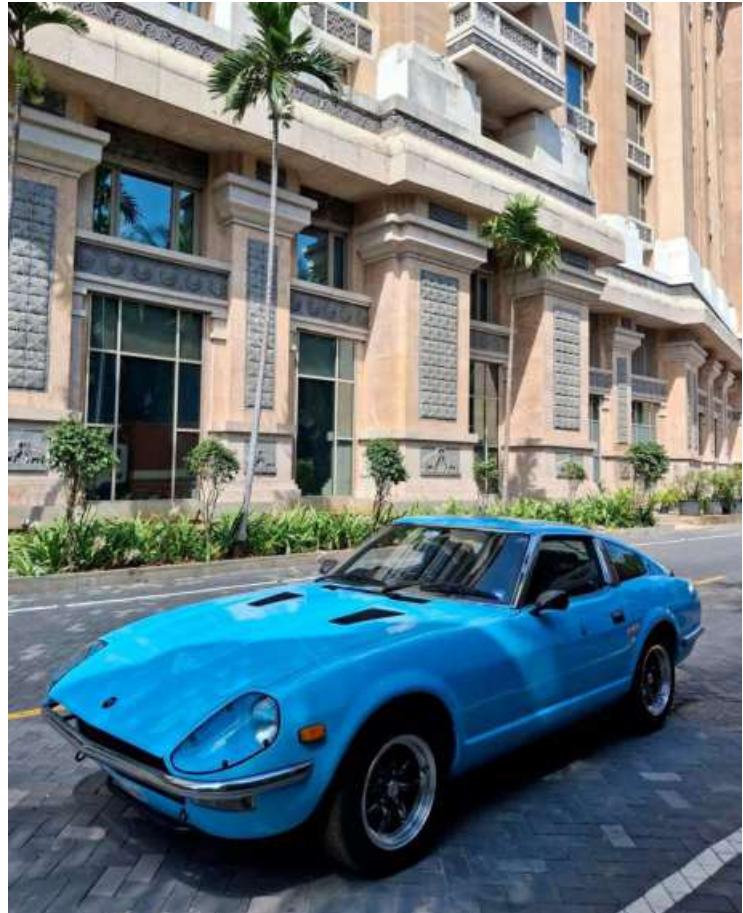
School students from CSI Bishop Corrie Anglo Indian Higher Secondary School in George Town recently visited Soori Amman Kovil Park Tank in the Pammal.

At the park, the students learned the methods for making green waste compost through garden waste from M. Panneerselvam, one of the core volunteers, said a release.

Waste segregation at the Park, water conservation, air purification, and tree saplings casting from S. Indrakumar of Home Exnora were explained, added the release.



Some of the cars that would be on display at Turyaa in Perungudi.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Heritage vehicle clubs show their mettle

Historical Cars Association of India has put up a grand stage in Chennai for illustrious collectors of vintage metal across India to display their precious possessions

Historical Cars Association of India (HCAI) has laid out a grand platform in Chennai for heritage car clubs across India to show their mettle -- their precious metal on wheels -- in its glittering best.

This is the second event of the same magnitude being held in Chennai by HCAI.

The clubs that make common cause with HCAI by lending their lustre to the event are as follows: Madras Heritage Motoring Club; Vintage and Classic Cars of India, Mumbai; Eastern India Motor group; and Karnataka Vintage and CLASSIC Car Club. Eighty cars and 20 bikes and scooters are being lined up at various events in Chennai and finally beyond, in Puducherry, in this three-day event (February 1-3).

Among vehicles that are likely to have eyeballs rolling over them longer on account of their unique place in the heritage car firmament, wider popularity, immaculate restoration or all of these factors rolled into one, are: MG TD (nicknamed Lal Pari) owned by Damman Thakore. This car has been driven to notice, becoming known around the world for its singular trip around Europe on road.

This MG is known to be unfussy. No temper tantrums and willing to go the extra mile with just a gentle coaxing from a 14 inch spanner. Credit for Lal Pari being always road-



ready to go to its master for keeping an impeccable maintenance record.

This car would be among the other unique cars that will be held court at Turyaa hotel in Perungudi on OMR on February 2, 2025,

being there between 9.30 a.m. and 1 p.m. for the public to view them in a show that will be opened by chief guest Arvind Swami, actor and entrepreneur.

Other unique cars on display include Chevrolet Fleetmaster, Rolls Royce Phantom III Landaulette, Datsun 240, Hudson, Alfa Romeo, 1979 Corvette C3, Morris Traveller (also called Morris Woody), Buick 8, Sunbeam Talbot, Peugeot 203, Ford Model A, Volkswagen Bus Beetle Ford Thunderbird and a variety of Jaguars. Bikes include Norton, Triumph, a range of Enfield models, BSA and Lambretta.

CELEBRATION

Float festival in Mylapore ends today

Procession of the utsavar deities of Sri Adhi Kesava Perumal, Andal and Peyazhwar were taken in the four Madaveethis of Sri Adhi Kesava Perumal Peyazhwar Devasthanam temple and were kept in the float car decorated by lights and flowers at the Chitrakulam. The trees and walls around Chitrakulam were decorated with lights and resultant look was delectable. Theppotsavam festival is held for five days, from January 29 to February 2.



On all these five days, the procession would start by 6.30 pm and reach the float by 8 pm. The float does three rounds around Chitrakulam and the deity is taken again in a procession to the *sanctum sanctorum* of the temple.

-- Photos and text: M. Srinath



A creative excursion for students



Chennai Photo Biennale 4 at Egmore Museum provides a creative excursion for school students of all ages. Students will have the chance to see children's photography from around the world, says a press release from Chennai Photo Biennale.

Here is how they can experience it, choosing between two options.

(A) Get in touch with CPB to schedule a guided tour with activities and trails. (B) Drop in and see the exhibition from Monday to Sunday (except for Fridays) between 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

CPB art mediators are always present to make the experience engaging for all ages, says the release. Call Uday 9566066111 or Gayatri 9940046599 for details.



When

parks

turn into open air art galleries

LIFFY THOMAS

More than 500 artists across age groups will turn Senmozhi Poonga into a dazzling kaleidoscope of colours on February 2. The second edition of Chennaiyil Oar Oviya Sangamam, an art exhibition presented by Indian Art Factory, will see participants, some from other cities, take every inch of their stall under tree canopies and behind plants to present a vibrant art gallery. The event is a big stage for aspiring and upcoming artists. Many of these artists do not have the means or the qualification to present their works at art galleries.

While the larger goal of taking art to public spaces is to bridge the gap between artists and audiences through creative expressions, the road to this is not so easy.

For six editions, the Art Fest at Nageswara Rao Park in Mylapore, curated by journalist and publisher Vincent D. Souza and artist Ganapathy Subramiam, has served as a date for public engagement. This year, however, the fest scheduled to take place during the last week of February, will see a change of venue.

Since civic works are under way at Nageswara Rao Park, the venue

is not fully suitable for an art show, says a post on Facebook. It meanwhile wants people to keep their artworks ready.

In August 2024, for the first time, Government College of Fine Arts in Egmore organised an art exhibition on the Egmore Museum premises.

In 2023, Anna Nagar Tower Park got to host the Tamil Nadu Art and Craft Trust Expo 2023 but with conditions. Greater Chennai Corporation did not give permission

for artworks to be sold, they could only be exhibited. "That was the condition laid down to me to use this venue and we agreed as we wanted to give many struggling artists a platform and to some extent the open air exhibition served its purpose," says the organiser Jaffer Beig who is a member of Tamil Nadu Artists Association.

Ganapathy Subramiam of Art Fest says they too were asked not to promote the event as a "sales event". "Art requires a lot of pro-



From the previous editions held at Senmozhi Poonga and Nageswara Rao Park

As more organisers of art events seek to host them outside galleries and museums, they expect support from the local civic body

motion, so the least support we ask for is that Greater Chennai Corporation give us space," says Ganapathy.

Like the Chitra Sante held annually on the streets of a neighbourhood in Bengaluru, such events need continuity and some support from the government or the civic body in terms of providing a venue that can draw people. Jaff-

er is looking for a space to host the art exhibition this year but he can only afford a minimal amount as fee.

Ganapathy says not all public spaces are suited for hosting an art event. "Nageswara Rao Park was right in every sense from location to size and the space plays host to various events including the Mylapore Fest so we did not have to promote it," he says.

Selvakannan Rathinam, founder, Indian Art Factory, says organising an event of such scale is not easy. "I have paid the Horticulture Department ₹75,000 towards rent for a day, which is fine but I have been requesting a waiver in entry fee for visitors on the D-Day or it would not draw the public," says Selvakannan.

From 125 artists in the first edition, this time the event has 525 people, 70 from other states, taking part in it. "We do not have an application process to shortlist artists; we look at the Instagram profile and their artworks and charge ₹1500 per stall and they have a conformed space at the venue," says Selvakannan. As a self-taught artist he has faced many rejections from art galleries so he does not like to shortlist participants.

Last year, the artist community made ₹ 4 lakh selling works. This time, our target is ₹ 25 lakh, so we want a good footfall, he says.

Lessons from Chitra Santhe

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A majority of organisers of art events and artists will swear by Bengaluru's Chitra Santhe. Happening for the last 22 years, the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath organises this art festival around its campus and extend it to a few VIP roads on the first Sunday of January.

Streets are strictly pedestrian only for the entire day, vehicular traffic is diverted for art to spread out in all forms, shapes and sizes. So big has this street art festival grown that this year the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation offered feeder services to the venue and Namma Yatri offered free autorickshaw rides.

Shashidhar Rao S.N., general secretary, Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, says the festival has had its own set of challenges that were ironed out gradually.

Last year, 1,800 artistes from 22 states presented their works and over six lakh people attended the day-long festival. A number of the participants are from rural areas of Karnataka who get a platform. "A number of stalls

have sold more than ₹3 lakh worth of art and we don't charge any commission from them except the registration fee of ₹ 1000 that covers breakfast, lunch and accommodation for outstation artists," says Rao.

From a manual process, three years ago an exclusive website was designed for participants to process their application form, know whether they are shortlisted and make the payment.

Does the Karnataka government fund the event? Rao says the government has been supportive but they don't have a fixed amount being given every year. "Sometimes promises are made and sometimes we get only 20% of the amount but we have no complaints. We are happy with the support various departments give us including by cordoning off vehicles for 12 hours which is a big challenge in a city like Bengaluru," he says.

Rao says registration fee is one component through which the expenses of organising this festival is met. Given the increasing crowd that has been turning up for the event, the Parishath has been mulling about moving it to a park.



Vidyodaya organises annual reunion

The Vidyodaya Schools Alumni Association – Poorva Vidhyarthini Samaj – had its annual reunion on January 25, 2025 at the Vidyodaya School premises. The event was attended by over 200 old students from various batches.

The correspondent and heads of the schools updated the old students on the achievements of the current students in academics, sports and extra-curricular activities, says a press release. Eighteen old and three retiring teachers were honoured.

Victoria, a very popular sports teacher, spoke of her 40-plus years as

a teacher in Vidyodaya and how the schools followed its motto of service and sacrifice even today.

Twelve scholarships (given by the alumni for over 18 years) amounting to ₹1.44 lakhs for students from low socio-economic families studying in Vidyodaya were distributed.

The alumni decided to increase it to ₹15000 per child from next year (1.8 lakhs). The stalls were varied and well-appreciated. The 1975 batch donated two smart boards and other equipment to the tune of ₹2 lakhs to the school for their 50th year of passing out. Many students came forward to donate for the scholarships, says

the release.

Dakshayani, an alumna, donated ₹50,000 for a sports scholarship. Games and a delicious high tea rounded off a nostalgic evening for all the alumni, the press release adds.

Vidyodaya is a premier girls school which is 101 years old with 2700 children and has always been a beacon of education and knowledge giving an all-round holistic education, focusing on academics, sports, cultural and overall development. Upto the year 1970 boys were also educated till 5th Std. Several well known and distinguished personalities have passed out of this esteemed institution.

Free medical camps to create awareness about cancer

As part of World Cancer Day, Sringeri Sharada Equitas Hospital at Gowrivakkam will conduct a series of free medical camps at different venues. Screening for cancer will also be conducted for those who require. Camps will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Medavakkam Ruby Elite gated community on February 8; at Vyasarpani on February 21 and at Ambattur on February 22.

Cancer awareness talks, camps

and other activities will be conducted at DAV School in Pallikaranai on February 4; Madras Christian College on February 13 and at Venkateswara Homeo College in Porur on February 18.

These awareness activities and camps are intended at creating awareness among the public, emphasising the importance of identifying cancer at an early stage, said a press release.

Sringeri Sharada Equitas Hospital in Gowrivakkam is a 100-bed not-for-profit hospital inaugurated in 2023 that aims to provide affordable cancer care to patients from weaker sections of society. The hospital has been built and is operated as a joint initiative of Equitas Healthcare Foundation, an arm of Equitas Small Finance Bank's CSR programme and Sringeri Sri Sharada Math. For details, call 9841361018.

Thai expo concludes in city



A three-day 'Thai Brands Exhibition 2025', organised by the Thai Trade Center concluded at Express Avenue Mall recently.

Racha Aribarg, Consul General of Thailand, Chennai, and Chek Jeenaphan, director of Thai Trade Center, Chennai, inaugurated the exhibition.

Over 30 brands representing fashion, food, beauty and design participated. The visitors experienced Thailand's craftsmanship, from traditional handicrafts to modern tech solutions, said a release.

School conducts expo on Thirukkural



The Vyasa Vidyalaya Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Puzhuthivakkam - Madipakkam recently conducted an expo on classic Tamil language text.

Kalyanaraman, principal of Presidency College, and M. Padikaramu, poet, were the chief guests. On the occasion, the poet unveiled a statue of Thiruvalluvar.

This year's exhibition re-

volved around the theme 'Integrating the timeless values of Thirukkural with modern life.'

The expo featured thought provoking models of Thirukkural from kindergarten to the higher secondary classes. The students provided a detailed and eloquent explanation of their work, impressing visitors with creativity and deep understanding, said a release.

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An Indian jackal up against the plastic pandemic



On the tail of an Indian jackal at Pulicat, naturalist Kumaresan Chandrabose documented how the plastic pollution interferes with the food gathering routine of this animal. As it was trying to scavenge for food, this particular Indian jackal found plastic throwaways greeting its muzzle. All photos by Kumaresan Chandrabose.

From a summer workshop to scaling new heights

Mylapore resident Anupama Ramachandran is on a roll winning many snooker and billiards tournaments while juggling a post graduate programme at MOP Vaishnav College for Women



RAJALAKSHMI V.

Twenty-two-year-old Anupama Ramachandran has a busy calendar this month. She is leaving for the World Women's Snooker Ranking Tournament in Belgium that begins this week, followed by Asian Championship in Doha from February 17.

The post graduate student of public policy at MOP Vaishnav College for Women is on a roll, winning medals in snooker and billiards. She recently won gold in the National Women's Snooker Championship (senior category) 2024-2025 in Indore; silver in the National 6-Red Women's Snooker Championship 2024-2025, and



another silver in the National Billiards Women's Championship 2024-2025.

Interest in billiards started during a summer workshop at the Mylapore Club when Anupama was 13. Since the age of 15 she has been playing competitive snooker.

Last year, in Chennai, she won the National Billiards Champion-

Anupama Ramachandran

ship. "One of my best moments was when I won the Women's Snooker World Cup in Bangkok in 2023," says Anupama, an alumnae of Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School.

Her inspirations come from billiards and snooker players like Mark Antony Selby, Ronnie O'Sullivan, and Judd Trump.

Her training routine varies. "I usually train solo for a couple of hours. I work on my skills and techniques when I play at home. In the afternoons, I practice at the Madras Cricket Club for 4 to 5 hours. Then, I practise at the Tamil Nadu Billiards and Snooker Association in Mandaveli, with other players," says Anupama, who is a Mission International Medals Scheme (MIMS) awardee. The scheme provides financial assistance to sports persons in Tamil Nadu. She also trains with her uncle K. Narayanan, a sports performance specialist.

"In the last couple of years, there has been an improvement in the standards of competition, and the game has improved among women in India and globally. I am playing the game at a time like this, and doing well is a blessing. There are many medal winners from India, both men and women. If they are recognised and promoted, the game will gain more popularity," she adds.

NEIGHBOURHOOD BUZZ

A gift from photojournalists



Over 100 students of classes III to V of Chennai Primary School at Besant Road in Royapettah received a new pair of scout uniforms, courtesy the Press Photographers Association. This is the 14th year of this gesture by the group: they sponsor the cost of stitching uniforms and other accessories that go with them.

Salute to Mothers programme held



Sri Krishna Sweets recently organised the 14th edition of Salute to Mothers programme at Narada Gana Sabha. In this programme 14 celebrities mothers were honoured. A snapshot of the programme in which Vasanthi Rajendran, mother of G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan and G.R. Radhakrishnan, managing directors of GRT Groups, was honoured by writer Sivasankari. Also in the picture are M.Murali, MD of Sri Krishna Sweets and industrialist Nalli Kuppuswamy Chetti.