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The Abiramapuram doctor enjoys marathon running at 67. And fitness tops her 'lockdown' days.



By S. Prabhu

Through the entire period of the lockdown, 67 year old Dr. Santha Narayanan has been going through a rigorous fitness schedule at home with a programme devised on Zoom by her Bangalore-based sister and former India women's cricket fitness trainer Radha Krishnaswamy.

Every morning, with the objective of strengthening the muscles, she has been following a one hour regime that comprises of high intensity on the spot running, skipping and 5 kg weight squats.

She has also been doing regular breathing exercises that she says will contribute to the expansion of the lungs. Added to all this is meditation and yoga.

"As a senior citizen, the body is vulnerable and the immunity tends to be low. Through this disciplined fitness programme, I have discovered a never before felt lightness in the body and mind," she says.

On April 1 this year, she became the first doctor to organize a webinar in Tamil Nadu. Since then, she has conducted several webinars including 15 in May.

The fitness routine she says has helped her immensely in keeping the mind fresh. While she did not go to her clinic in April and May, Dr. Santha, a pediatrician, later attended specific vaccination calls.

Last year, the Indian Medical Association (TN) presented her with the Best Doctor Award for her rural service. She has been holding medical camps in the remote town of Arasalur, near Thottiyam, for the last 15 years.

She says that if she has to continue to serve the people in that town, she would have to first keep herself fit. And that the current fitness regime helps her in that endeavour as well.

Just a month prior to the lockdown, she had one of her biggest moments of her life when she won in a category in the renowned international standard Tata Marathon in Bombay beating the best of the runners in the country completing the 10kms run in 74 minutes.

"I just participated and ran for fun, testing myself against the best. I did not even know that I had won till someone who watched me run congratulated me with the message that I was the champion," she recalls.

Santha was a state champion in athletics during her school and college years in the 1960s and 70s. She beat all the records that stood at that time winning 100 meters, 200 meters, long and high jump as well as the relay and helping Stella Maris College win the annual Dr. AL Mudaliar Inter College Championship.

It was after she won the Best Sports person award at Stella Maris that the chief guest of the day Dr. Sarathy, the dean of MMC offered her a medical education seat. She also captained the University to a national victory, achievements that secured her the prestigious University scholarship for four years.

For four decades after becoming a doctor she focused on her profession and took care of the family. It was only in May 2014 that she made a comeback to competitive running, driven by her fitness obsessed sister.

In February 2015, she did her first 10 km marathon at Auroville. So inspired was a policeman who saw her run in Chennai that he decided to run with her in the Auroville Marathon.

Last year, she made the trip to Hyderabad and was the runner up in the Airtel Marathon. In the Chennai Marathon, she stood third.

Her daily morning routine, pre-lockdown time started at 5.15 am with a run from Hotel Woodlands on to the Madras University and back in preparation of the popular TCS Marathon that was to take place in Bangalore in May. However, with the enforcement of the lockdown, the Marathon was cancelled.

So how does it feel to run at 67?

"I run for fun and not to win a medal. However, what is most pleasing is the fact that several people, youngsters and the elders alike have taken inspiration from me and have begun to practice every morning.

Also, those stressed out at work in the corporate world have found running and exercising alongside me as a stress buster.

It gives a good feel when you find youngsters almost half your age being motivated with my running routine."

The next big marathon on her calendar is the Delhi Marathon. She is looking forward to participating in that whenever it happens next.

Dr. Santha Narayanan has been a resident of East Abhirampuram for several decades.



This helpline is for dance community. Use it when you feel down.



Here is a helpline for dancers, dance students and anybody associated with classical dance.

It is a helpline for those who feel down, dispirited and lonely.

Association of Bharatanatyam Artistes of India (ABHAI) which has its operations out of Alwarpet has set up a phone counselling line for the community.

It was arranged by Dr Srinidhi Chidambaram, senior Bharatanatyam dancer and doctor at a city hospital, says dancer-guru Roja Kannan of ABHAI.

The number is 9840238651 (open from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.) daily Monday to Friday only.

The service is voluntary and free and open to artistes.

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Jottings

VINCENT D'SOUZA

One man's line crossed another woman's and the two have momentarily frozen in the time of the pandemic. And some good has come out of it in Mylapore.

Shabir worked in the western fringe of the city, lost his job and wandered to the Mylapore zone, on the edge of the tank of Sri Kapali Temple. His temporary roof was the projection of a local shop.

Around him, he noticed besides a few beggars and a weak woman, left to live her grey years on the footpath here.

Shabir began assisting her in small ways – getting some food and water. Conversing.

This has gone on for some time now; and when this story was put out on social media by community activist Baskar Seshadri, some kind-hearted people offered small donations to keep the two going.

We put out this story on our website (www.mylaporetimes.com). Hopefully, some more help will reach the two.

We also wrote on a Mandaveli home-based entrepreneur woman who ran a small catering business but needed to earn more for the family, especially in these trying times. So she offered breakfast and lunch to seniors and the orders increased. Now she seems to have three stoves burning in her kitchen.

Last night, we received a message from a young woman seeking employment. "I don't mind being a Covid volunteer," she messaged. Obviously, she got to know that the city civic body was the only one employing people on contract in large numbers.

We have connected her with people who may be able to help.

Do share stories that must be reported; in doing so people who need help, work and aid may get it from the neighbourhood.

We are at - mytimesedit@gmail.com.

For home cooked food, call this Mandaveli resident. She has been in this business for two decades.

By Preeti Srivatsan

It is the year 2000. R. Rajalakshmi, a resident of Thiruvengadam Street, Mandaveli and her family have just suffered a financial loss. She tried setting up a small shop outside her home but that didn't work out either. With the determination to get through tough times, she decides to cook a little extra lunch and dinner and sell it to those who needed it.



Soon her business picks up, her home cooked food is appreciated. Slowly she introduces delivery too.

Fast forward to March 2020. Rajalakshmi now has 25 regular customers.

She says, "I had to stop delivery ever since the lockdown was announced in March. All my customers now come home and pick up the food. I only deliver to a few seniors in my neighbourhood. Many of them are not able to step out as they are sick and so I walk down to their homes and drop off the food".

She says there are not many takers for dinner nowadays as people don't want to come out after 7 p.m. because of the curfew. But she says she will continue to help anybody who needs it. "It takes about three hours for me to cook meals for 25 customers and so I only request that people place their order one day in advance. That way I can plan my work better. Though lunch orders are more, I still haven't stopped cooking dinner. I also take orders for breakfast and will continue to do so till the lockdown ends".

Her lunch menu, which usually consists of sambar, poriyal, kootu and rasam, is priced at Rs. 140 per person. Rice is not

Woes of organic store in Alwarpet

On June 30 evening, customers of Organic Shandy, an organic market at Luz Church Road, Mylapore received a Whatsapp message from the store saying several orders could not be executed due to non-availability of produce.

Two vehicles carrying the produce were sent back due to the district-level lockdown.

P. B. Murali, one of the co-founders of the store, says, "Tuesday was a really tough day for us. We received close to 170 orders but were able to fulfill only 100 of them. We expected about 4 tons of produce but got only one ton. The produce van from Kodaikanal was turned back. Two farmers in Hosur said they could not send the produce at all".

Murali says that every time a driver comes from Kodaikanal to Chennai to deliver produce, the minute he gets back to Kodaikanal he is asked to go into a 15-day quarantine. This is clearly a big loss for him and so many drivers don't want to take up this job. At other times, the farmers only receive e-passes for a week and they have to keep getting it renewed which take a lot of time.

He wants the government to allow perishables to move into and out of the district freely. "Farmers will really struggle to sell their produce if this continues. For example, an organic farmer who is growing carrots in Kodaikanal can sell them in Chennai for Rs. 60 per kilo only if he sends it out as soon as it is harvested. If there is a delay in transportation he will have to sell it locally and will get only Rs. 10 per kilo."

The store is at 177, Luz Church Road, Luz (next to M. Ct. M School). Call 7708612348, 8056012036.

Photo courtesy: Organic Shandy

included. For dinner, 2 chapatis with subzi are priced at Rs. 50. Items like idli, kichidi and pongal are offered for breakfast.

All the necessary precautions with respect to social distancing and cleanliness are followed by her. Her customers wait at her gate and call her and she comes out with a mask and delivers the food, she says. To place your order call her at 9840770430.

Photo courtesy:

Chitrasfoodbook.com / used for representational purpose.

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Editorial & Publishing Office:

Shop 27, 2nd Flr., Corpn. Shopping Cplx.,
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Phone: 2498 2244, 2467 1122
E-mails : mytimesedit@gmail.com
mylaporetimes@gmail.com

Editor & Publisher - Vincent D'Souza
Sub Editor - Preeti Srivatsan
Reporter - Dheepthi O. J.
Photographer - M. Madhan Kumar
Designers - S. Prema
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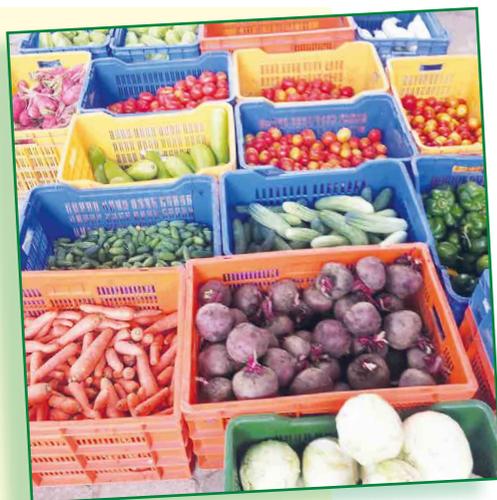
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DG of Police pays respects to policeman of Pattinapakkam

A simple tribute meet was held outside the premises of Pattinapakkam police station on July 1 evening to mark the death of SSI, Manimaran who succumbed to the virus.

DG of Police for TN, J. K. Tripathy was present and paid his respects at a specially-erected stage where a photo of the dead policeman was decorated with flowers.

Senior police officers besides men and women at the local station were present and observed some silence to mark the tribute while a police band played soulful music.

It was a simple, solemn event.



St Thomas feast; flag hoisting held inside Cathedral

This must have been a unique start to the celebration of a religious feast in the San Thome Cathedral.

On June 30 evening, the flag of saint Thomas was hoisted not on the massive flag mast outside the church and in the south west corner of the campus but inside the cathedral, near the main altar.

This symbolic act signalled the start of a shortened celebration of the feast of this saint who is believed to have come to India, spent time in this part of the city and martyred here.

The feast has been a low-key affair annually and this year, because of the regulations of the pandemic, celebrated indoors with a few priests and assistant laity.

On July 3, the saint's feast was to be celebrated with three Holy Masses – 7 a.m. 10 a.m. (Thamizh Mass by the archbishop and 5.30 p.m.

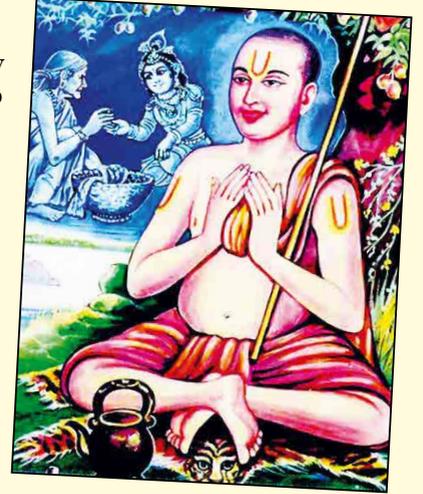
Sri Narayana Tirtha Swamigal's jayanthi: online Tarangam series

It's that time of the year when Sri Narayana Tirtha jayanthi is celebrated with an evening concert conducted by R. A. Puram based Thirupoonthuruthy Sri Narayana Tirtha Swamigal Trust.

Now, life is upside down. So V. Neela and V. Lakshmi

(daughters of late Thirupoonthuruthy V. Venkatesan who was the heart and soul behind this fest) were keen to "do something for this year's jayanthi" and have a new programme.

Swathi Ravichandran, Venkatesan's grand-daughter came up with the plan to host a 'Tarangam Series'.



Music artistes were asked to send in their choice of Gitam (a song from 12 Chapters / Tarangams of Sri Narayana Tirtha's Krishna Leela Tarangini), the sahyam was shared followed by a video recording from their side. The team from the Trust would later edit it and it would be sent back to the artistes for review.

The result – 20 different Tarangam Gitams, rendered by 20 different artistes have been uploaded so far. Two 45-minute namasankeerthana performances were held on Jayanthi Day (July 1).

#TarangamSeries songs are uploaded at 10 a.m. on weekdays and at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on weekends on Facebook, Youtube and Twitter. The Trust is at 10/2, 2nd Main Road, R. A. Puram. Visit <http://www.narayanatirtha.org>.

Special Bharatanatyam classes. Fees will be used for a cause

Two senior Bharatanatyam dancers and gurus are hosting four learning sessions in July and in doing this, also inviting donations for a fund that supports retired, sick and senior artistes who served the art and are in dire need this pandemic time.

Gurus Roja Kannan and Nithyakalyani Vaidyanathan have curated these sessions – July 4 and 5, 11 and 12, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. IST.

While Roja teaches a unique dance piece learnt from her guru late Adyar K. Lakshman, Nithyakalyani teaches a classic padam she learnt from late guru and abhinaya expert Kalanidhi Naryananan.

You can sign up and donate to a fund that Association of Bharatanatyam Artistes of India (ABHAI) started many weeks ago and has since then supported lots of needy artistes and will continue to do so.

Call Revathy – 9444377041 – to sign up.



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K. Veera Raghava Bhattar

84 year old K. Veera Raghava Bhattar of Sri Adi Kesava Perumal Temple, Mylapore passed away on Sunday morning (June 28) at Sri Ramachandra Medical College Hospital due to diabetic health related issues.



In the temple circles, he was popularly known as 'Chellapillai' Bhattachar, a name that his grandmother kept after the lord of Thiru Narayanapuram, Melkote. He belonged to the

11th generation of his clan who performed Thiru Aradhanam at the Adi Kesava Perumal Temple in Mylapore.

An expert in Vaikanasa Agama, he was also initiated into Sanskrit Kaavyams at a very young age.

He had been performing daily Thiru Aradhanam at Sri Adi Kesava Perumal Temple for the last 70 years having joined service at the age of 14, way back in Panguni of 1950.

27 year old G Srinivasa Raghavan, his grandson says that during the lockdown, since the temple was closed for devotees, they had suggested that he move to a relative's house in an ancestral village near Chengalpet but he refused to move away from Sri Kesava Perumal of Mylapore where he had performed service for seven decades.

"He dedicated his entire life to the service of Kesava Perumal. Once in a while, he would visit Sri Parthasarathy Temple in Thiruvallikeni but otherwise he was always seen at Sri Kesava Perumal Temple," said Raghavan.

Even during the lockdown and despite his old age, he had been performing service at the temple.

Just a fortnight ago, his nephew, 64 year old Kumar Bhattar passed away. Srinivasa Raghavan says that the sudden death of his nephew saddened him a lot and he was continuously lost in thoughts of his nephew in the days following his death.

Since the age of 19, he has been reciting Ramayana and he completed one such reading of the entire Ramayana last year as well. Srinivasa Raghavan spoke to his grandfather over phone on Saturday

evening and says that his grandfather was cheerful and chanted slokas of Lord Rama and the death has come as a big shock to the entire family

Just over 5 years ago, he was anointed with the 'Kainkaryia Srimaan' crown by Velukkudi Krishnan of Kinchitkaram Trust.

- Report by S. Prabhu

Dharmambal Vaidyanathan

Dharmambal Vaidyanathan passed away at her residence at Luz Avenue, Mylapore on June 25, 2020 at the age of 96 years, hours after taking a COVID-19 test and testing negative.



Born on September 16, 1924, she was the daughter of Rajammal and M.Subbaraya Aiyar, a well-known advocate, Palathope, Mylapore.

She was born and brought up in Mylapore and was married to A. Vaidyanathan, an engineer,

entrepreneur and partner of Evans, a small-scale industrial enterprise at Ambattur Industrial Estate.

She studied at Lady Sivaswamy Aiyar Girls' High School in Mylapore and graduated with a gold medal in music from Queen Mary's College. Music was an integral part of her life.

After her early music tutelage with Devaraja Mudaliar and Venkatagiriappa, she came under Madurai Mani Iyer. She took special lessons on Dikshitar's compositions from Cheranmadevi Subrahmanya Sastrigal and later under B. Rajam Iyer.

She learnt Papanasam Sivan songs from Mani Bhagavathar, a senior and prime disciple of Sivan. She had in her repertoire many compositions of Oothukadu Venkatakavi thanks to Oothukadu brothers who were specialists of those songs. Blessed with a steady voice and clear enunciation of lyrics and swaras, she picked up nuances on listening to her gurus only once. She was her teachers' delight and they eagerly awaited classes with her and built her foundation.

Padam Gowri Ammal, the great dance legend was her niece's dance teacher and a frequent visitor to her house. She imbibed many padams and javalis from her.

Raghunath Panigrahi, also a family friend and frequent visitor, taught her many ashtapadhis of Jayadeva. She learnt bhajans from Ramamurthy Rao.

She had a brief singing career with performances over All India Radio – AIR. She devoted her time to home-making and teaching nieces, friends and those who desired to learn from her. She was exacting in her standards of shruthi and laya and followed the traditional rendition with the right intonations to bring out the bhava and bhakthi of various styles of compositions.

In later years, she became her own guru, adding to her musical treasury by learning from notations and adding notations to compositions which had none. A vidushi in her own right, she did not come under the arc lights of the performing stage. As they say, some flowers are born to blush unseen.

As a home-maker, she delighted and treated her family and relatives to goodies of different kinds. She was good at knitting crochet and other crafts.

Her determination and will power in everyday life was inspiring to the youngsters and came to the fore during her last days when she fought Covid 19 and succeeded in testing negative.

Her family said that her message to all at this time was not fear the virus but fight it bravely. During her quarantine and treatment, she listened to music and enjoyed the nuances of different ragas. Her last conscious wish was to listen to Aragimpave by Saint Thyagaraja and rendered by the late music maestro GNB.

She leaves behind her daughter Lakshmi Radhakrishnan, a grandson, granddaughter and their families.

- Written by Shobana Ramkumar

S. Chandramouli



S. Chandramouli aged 71 years and a senior resident of Mylapore for more than 40+ years passed away on June 9 at Mumbai. He was admitted to a hospital after he complained of fever and cough, was treated for Corona virus and succumbed to it.

Chandramouli was a retired employee of CPCL (Chennai Petroleum Corporation).

He is survived by his wife, two daughters and their families. Contact email – chitra.mouli@gmail.com

Said his family, in a note – "He was a great soul and a wonderful role model to many of his well wishers. He was an epitome of magnanimity and generosity."



Supermarket introduces self-billing and check out facility

SunnyBee supermarket at T.T.K Road, Alwarpet will introduce a self-billing and check out facility, through which customers can bill the items they buy by themselves and make payment through the same. This way, the store manager says there will be no-touch/ interaction between its staff and customers.

Says S. Thiagaragan, general manager,

public relations, Sunny Bee, "We have an in-house tech team that created the software in 20 days. As soon as the customers scan the product, they can see the price of the product and the QR code. Once the bill is generated they can make the payment with their card".

All touchpoints in the self-billing machine will be sanitised frequently, he says.



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