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## COVID CARE FRONTLINE WORKER DEEPA APPRECIATED FOR HER SERVICE

By Our Staff Reporter

When Chennai Corporation was seeking dozens of contract workers to support its local campaigns when the pandemic broke out in early 2020, Deepa from Srinivasapuram, a seaside colony off Pattinapakkam signed up.

This HR-trained grad who had given up a challenging job to take care of her two young children wanted to earn and the trying times were pushing the family to the edge, at times.

Deepa's job was to track people showing virus symptoms, isolate them, get tests and treatment rolled out – she toiled all through 2020 and her contract was closed late last year.

But when the second wave of the virus hit people in March this year, Deepa was back as a contracted Covid care worker.

For her sustained field work and some significant achievements, Deepa was recognised by local officials of GCC this week. They presented her with a special T-shirt. Present at this meet, was the area engineer and sanitary inspector who felicitated her.

This past week, Deepa and her team had managed to get 50 people to take the jab in Srinivasapuram, a commendable effort in a colony where people simply refused to be vaccinated.

Deepa says she and her team that surveys Ward 173 (R A Puram – KVB Gardens – MRC Nagar – Srinivasapuram) have been persistent in locating people with symptoms and getting them quarantined and treated as early as possible.

It is not an easy job. Not in the 39 degrees heat of May, when you are out in the field from 8 a.m. to noon time.

## Dry Temple Tank

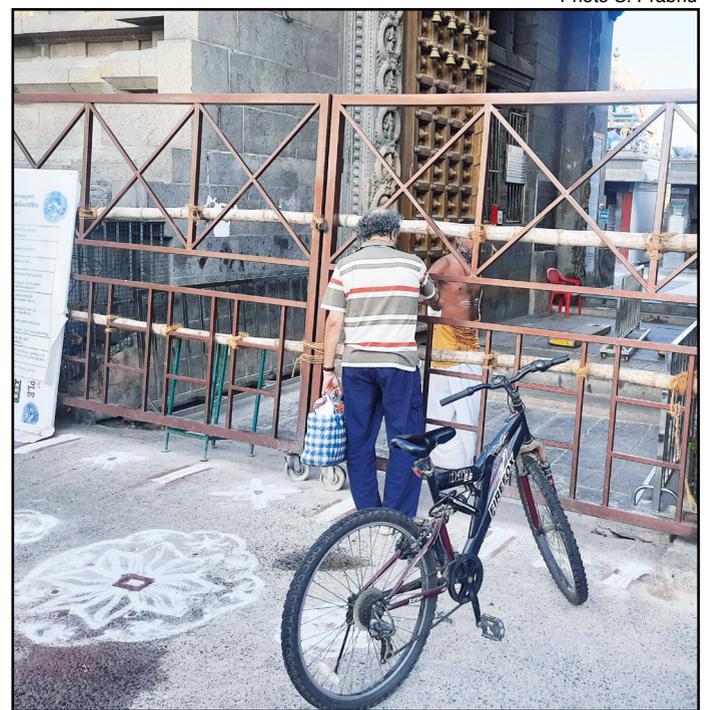
This is the state of the tank of Sri Kapaleswarar Temple, Mylapore. This photo was shot last week.



Covid or non-Covid times, there are a few people who do their bit for the temple of their choice and do it come rain or shine. And do it quietly.

Take this man you see in this photo. He cycles every morning and is at the east gopuram gate of Sri Kapali Temple in Mylapore to hand over a packet of milk for the morning abishekham.

Photo S. Prabhu



## Inviting Children to Contribute Creatively

MYLAPORE TIMES is launching on its website this summer season ([www.mylaporetimes.com](http://www.mylaporetimes.com)) a magazine to feature contributions from school students - Std.5 and above.

What can you share with us?

- **Short stories** - max - 300 words.
- **Poems** - max. 15 lines
- **Photo Features** - choose a subject ( a terrace garden, evening games in colony, etc); shoot 3/4 great, different photos; write 7 lines on the subject
- **Middles** - light, local notes - on a community's Covid effort, fun Sunday lunch at home, Hangout experience, etc. - 100 words.
- **Art** - painting, drawing, sketches.

If you wish to contribute, first e-mail your idea to the Editor, get the OK and only then work on the piece. Mail ID - [mytimesedit@gmail.com](mailto:mytimesedit@gmail.com). Subject line: MAG If you want ideas to start from, you too can e-mail the Ed.



## THESE WOMEN LOST THEIR JOBS AS MAIDS. NOW THEY SELL FOOD BY THE BEACH TO MAKE ENDS MEET

By Kavitha Benni

Renuka, a 45 year old mother from Nambikkai Nagar, a colony sandwiched in the blocks off the Marina Loop Road lost her housekeeping job some 4 months ago.

She was employed by a Korean family in MRC Nagar, hardly a kilometre away from her hearth.

Badly hurt by the dwindling income and savings, Renuka has begun to grind idli maavu at home and sells it along the Loop Road after dusk.

"I use the rice given at my ration shop and buy ulundhu paruppu from a store," she says. The maavu prices start from Rs.15 and on most days she manages to get the amount she stocks in a plastic bucket sold off.

Ambika is another resident of this area who also worked in a large apartment in MRC Nagar but lost her job in January. Now, she makes vegetable brinji at home and like Renuka, hawks the food on the Loop Road side.

"At least this brings us some cash for daily use," she says.

Elsewhere, women who have lost their jobs at local area residences are engaging in small efforts to earn in these trying times. Those who used to sell fresh fish, now dry fish and sell the karvaddu.

## VACCINATION; ARE THE PLANS AD HOC? ARE KEY GROUPS LOSING OUT?

By Our Staff Reporter

On Saturday, May 29, a vaccine camp was hosted at what is a posh kalyana mantapam in MRC Nagar. GCC, the collaborator said only those above 45 years could take the jab.

In the three hours that the camp was open, some 30 people alone got the jab and some 170 doses had to be taken back by the medical team.

And the local collaborator, the members of MRC Nagar Residents' Association went home utterly frustrated.

Herein lies the story of the vaccination process at the neighbourhood level. Ad hoc, narrow and dithering.

For some days now, GCC has been asking community bodies to host vaccine camps with its support. There are some 100 RWAs in Mylapore, mostly associations of apartments and less of colonies. The newly elected MLA has been trying to get this campaign going.

But the GCC, from recent experiences, seems to be working on an ad hoc mode and its acts seem to indicate that the drives are not meant for the poor and youths now.

The MRC Nagar community leaders have been working hard to impress on the GCC and others to have the jab for poor youths and those in the 45 plus category. But on Saturday, the team at the venue refused to go beyond the mandate of the day - so 170 doses got returned.

No effort was made by GCC or the MLA or by the RWAs body to trumpet details of this camp which may have brought say 30/50 more people.

MRC Nagar community leaders say that they had with them a list of 100 plus people of the zone in the 18 - 45 age group who work as maids, guards, odd jobs workers and collegians and had the GCC team budged, they would have got all the doses exhausted. That was not to be.



But at some GCC clinics, the staff take the liberty to give the jab to youths on some occasions. Nobody can explain this ad hoc process that goes on.

In some other GCC clinics, staff say they are now asked to go offices, campuses and construction sites and give the jab to all present.

In places like the kuppam zone of San Thome where vaccination is at its lowest, no effort has been made to convince people on the jab and then, camps held to vaccinate them. Here, for now, many who fall sick remain home quarantined and the seriously ill taken to hospitals.

RWA members who are working hard to get the vaccine provided to the community say they are a frustrated lot and moan the lack of transparency and mixed approaches ( example, some Rotary Clubs are holding camps across the city where all youths get the jab free).

"Why is the vaccine given to youths in some places and refused in others. This, none from GCC and from the MLA's side can answer," said a senior RWA leader on anonymity.

Mylapore MLA Velu deflects the shortcomings. He claims that the doses meant for the middle-aged are not to be given to youths ( which is not factual) and that efforts are being made to vaccinate the people in kuppams and slums.

One camp was held on Monday last in Srinivasapuram.

## These two projects of Mylapore Times Trust seek your donations

Two projects supported by Mylapore Times Charitable Trust (MTCT) are now into the second week of progress.

The first arranges for dry food rations to the poorest of the poor families living in the colonies off San Thome High Road.

The second arranges for a cup of hot milk to be provided to some 110-plus frontline contract health workers of a Ward in R. A. Puram as they start their day at 7 a.m.

These workers, mostly in the



20 to 35 years age group, are mostly people who value the money that is promised for their work which includes keeping an eye on people falling ill, testing, reporting cases, taking people to test centres and keeping tab on home-quarantined people and promoting

the vaccine.

The civic body does not provide tea/tiffin as it did last year due to budget cuts. Each day's bill is about Rs.700.

The families who are given the dry rations are those who have lost

one or both heads of the family to Covid or those who have lost their daily-wage jobs and are in penury now.

If you want to be part of this programme, you are welcome to donate. ( The Trust has been in operation for over 22 years). Already, ten people have donated to the current projects.

Details of the bank account given below ( when you make a donation please also mail us a note at [mytimesedit@gmail.com](mailto:mytimesedit@gmail.com)) – **Indian Bank, Abiramapuram, Chennai, India.**

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### MYLAPORE TIMES

#### Editorial & Publishing Office:

Shop 27, 2nd Flr., Corpn. Shopping Cplx.,  
77, C. P. Ramaswamy Rd., Alwarpet, Chennai -18  
Phone: 2498 2244, 2467 1122  
E-mails : mytimesedit@gmail.com  
mylaporetimes@gmail.com

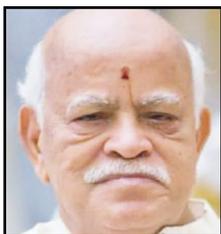
Editor & Publisher	- Vincent D'Souza
Photographer	- M. Madhan Kumar
Freelance Writer	- S. Prabhu
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Designer	- S. Prema
Accountant	- K. Mohan
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## Obituary



**B. B. Balaguruaiya**, a senior resident of CIT Colony passed away recently.

He was involved in a few business enterprises and promoted education and was a

keen supporter of the community activities of CIT Colony, Mylapore.

He was born in Erode on Sep 16, 1933 to B. Balavenkatarama Chettiar and Ramalakshmi Ammal. His father had started a brass vessels store named K. Balaguruva Chettiar & Sons in Erode in 1904. It is still in existence, 117 years since.

Balaguruaiya did his B.Com (Hons) from Pachaiyappa's College, Madras in 1957. He started a stainless utensils factory in 1966 in Erode and shifted it to Chennai in 1970.

The factory now runs in the name of Shri Sravana Fabricators. His family has expanded their business into computer hardware and software sales and service, CAD & engineering services, manufacture of unsaturated polyester resins, real estate and construction.

He was the second correspondent of Vaasavi College in Erode from 1969 to 1972. It is now a premium institution with over 3000 students.

He set up a charitable Trust in the name of his father K. Balavenkatarama Chettiar. Through the Trust he started a school in association with Vivekananda Education Society. Today, K. Balaguruva Chettiar Vivekananda Vidyalaya in Veerapuram has over 1000 students making a difference to life of many under-privileged students., his family said.

He was closely associated with the CIT Colony park project and contributed significantly to its development.

**V. Subramanian**, Alwarpet-based senior citizen passed away on May 29.



Subramanian was a senior audit officer from AG's office who became professor in AICWA SIRC institute after his retirement. His love for teaching and his keenness to prepare

students for the AICWA exams, enabled him to teach even till the age of 85. He used to get up at 4 a.m. to evaluate the answer papers, then drive to the institute and take classes non-stop for many hours.

In addition to Costing & Accountancy, his other interests included drawing, bhajans and Carnatic music. He regularly attended the December Season music fest concerts for the past 60 years. He used to carry his drawing kit to the concert halls and draw the artistes on stage. He would then get the artistes for their autographs on the drawing.

Subramanian is survived by his wife Valli Subramanian, daughter Jayanthi Sundar, son Vaidyanathan, son-in-law Sundararaman, daughter-in-law Kavitha, grandsons, Adithya, Anirudh, Atulya, Atreya, grand daughters-in-law Nithya, Aarthi and great grandsons Sahasrajith and Anadajith.

His family can be reached at 9840923764 (Sundararaman).

**Kamesh Bavaratnam**, 42 a resident of R. A. Puram who passed away recently due to Covid illness was a hyperactive community civic activist and a passionate fan of music composer Ilayaraja.



He wrote on local civic issues online and also took them up with

officials. He ran his own business of recruitment and this followed from his working experience in the HR field.

He was also an avid follower of Thamizh film music and a big fan of film music director-composer Ilayaraja. He would sing Ilayaraja songs at informal and formal meet-ups. Said a friend, "Kamesh was crazy about Ilayaraja and was closely associated with Raja sir's official fan club."

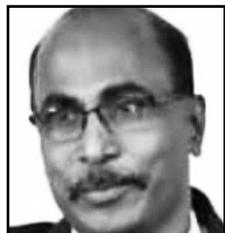
He was also a good medium pace bowler in his youth and a leader in his schooldays.

Kamesh had lost his mother recently.

He is survived by his aged father who is 82 now, his wife and daughter Hiranmayi who is nine years old.

– Reported by Baskar Seshadri

**Roy Anand**, 58, a soft skills trainer, director at Orisen Consulting and a resident of Abiramapuram passed away on Friday (May 28) due to post Covid complications.



Suave, affable and a deeply spiritual person, he was a mentor to many youngsters, a first bencher at the morning

English Mass and a pillar of Our Lady of Visitation Church in Abiramapuram.

Roy leaves behind his wife – Mary Roy, a school teacher, son – Joseph Xavier Roy and daughter – Joselyn Leema Roy. The family resides in the colony inside the church compound.

– By Sanjay Pinto

**Vijayalakshmi**, a veteran tambura artiste and long-time resident of Mylapore passed away on May 23.



With her passing, the Carnatic music world has lost another artiste who was like a link between the past and present in the field, said one of her co-artistes.

Vijayalakshmi accompanied a large range of artistes on the concert stage. She was known for her simplicity and self respect. Always punctual at the concerts where she had to play the tambura, she would pleasantly greet the artistes for whom she was playing.

On the morning of a concert, she would call up her co-artistes to offer her services if she was free, her co-artistes said. During the busy December Season there were days when she would have back-to-back schedules.



This is the work of D. B. Sumana Shri, a student of M. C. Ct. M. Senior Sec. School, Alwarpet and a resident of Nallappan Street, Mylapore. It is featured in the Summer Magazine for Children on the Mylapore Times website - [www.mylaporetimes.com](http://www.mylaporetimes.com).

There are over 40 contributions - stories, poems and artworks - contributed by students of Mylapore.

## footloose in Chennai

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## Appu Street's 'Re-cycling' Garden

Sasibalika uses dishes, barrels and coconut shells to good effect on her terrace. Now, sparrows are daily visitors.

By Bama Ranganathan

This terrace garden has fruit trees, flowering plants, and lily ponds too!

It has always Sasibalika's dream to enjoy a cup of tea while sitting under the rustling branches of a spreading tree and the birds filling the air with their joyous sound.

Living in Chennai, in crowded areas of Triplicane, then Kilpauk, and finally Mylapore, Sasiba-

lika did not really think that her dream would soon become a reality.

It did.

Her terrace of her house on Appu Street is now a peaceful haven - beautiful tuberose of many hues, small lotus, and lily ponds and many trees like guava, sapota, and drumstick.

Small sparrows are also slowly making this terrace their daily haunt.

"A few years ago, a couple of sparrows used to visit my

balcony to eat or drink. Now I see at least 10 or 12 pairs daily. I set out thinai feeders for them and small dishes of water. I also grow thinai plants for the sparrows and they love to eat this", says Sasibalika.

Her terrace garden differs from many others in a very big way - each pot and planter is reconstructed from some item or the other which has been discarded by people.

"I have a tie-up with a waste-paper dealer in Mandaveli," says Sasibalika with a laugh. "Whenever he comes across a container which could be of use to me, he informs me and I pick it up from him", she says.

Many 20-litre water cans have been repurposed as pots. "I have also collected

big thermocol boxes from the road-sides", she says.

"The cycle repair shop nearby threw out a shallow, broad dish with a big scratch. I brought it in, beautified it a bit, and converted it into a lily pond", she goes on.

A lot of painstaking, patient work is needed for these projects but Sasibalika says she enjoys every bit of it.

"I wanted my garden to be a concept garden. Why should I buy material from shops when I can create my own? Waste not, want not", she adds.

The beautiful lotus pond was a big water barrel that one of her neighbours threw away.

"I cut the barrel into two parts. The smaller part is the lotus pond and the larger,

deeper part holds my guava tree. It has yielded so many fruits for us to enjoy", she adds. "I also collect coconut shells from all my neighbours to make a rudimentary stand - I stack my planters on top of them - a natural and effective method", she shares.

Her husband helps her with the heavy lifting and her daughter gives her wonderful ideas and suggestions.

"I get great satisfaction from my garden. I am happy that I am able to reuse and recycle material like this effectively. Nowadays, I buy a plant and even if I don't have a container right away, I am happy to wait. I know the right one will find me", she remarks with a smile.

Sasibalika Ramadoss is a resident of Appu Street. Her contact - balikaram@gmail.com

WATCH A SNAPPY VIDEO on this garden. at [www.youtube.com/mylaporetv](http://www.youtube.com/mylaporetv)

SHARE YOUR LOCAL STORY - tell this newspaper of people who recycle stuff, maintain a unique garden or nurture a rare hobby. Call 24982244.



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