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The Muck the River and Sea Throw Up

The seashore off Srinivasapuram, at the mouth of the Adyar river is covered with all kinds of waste – vegetation, metal and plastic.

How did it get here?

This is the waste that the gushing waters of the river washed up overnight.

When the Chembarabakkam shutters were opened to let out water recently as its level rose, the waters carried the waste that lies on the river banks and around.

Residents in this strip of land in the Pattinapakkam zone that juts into the river have been told to keep off the waters which can flow in great force now.

Some fishers often fish in the backwaters: some months ago, a youth who was fishing in a boat that got toppled was washed away and he died.

Left-over wedding meals: how to share it at night?

By Our Staff Reporter

The rain and the cyclone does not discourage people from postponing a wedding or a social event.

But on two nights, the hosts of functions held at the Chennai Corporation community hall on Luz Avenue, alongside Nageswara Rao Park found that a large amount of food prepared for guests was left over.

So they tried to call people up to get help in distributing the food to the needy and poor. Workers at the park called their boss but at the late hour of 11 p.m. though she relayed the message she said she couldn't get any NGOs connected. By then, somehow the food got distributed locally. A lot of food gets left over at weddings and social events, more so when the weather plays truant and guests skip the function. Some voluntary bodies have tied up with wedding planners and halls to collect such food and get it distributed quickly to the local needy.

If there is a NGO that undertakes such acts locally, do mail info to this newspaper - mytimesedit@gmail.com

Manohar Devadoss decorated with Padma Shri

San Thome resident Manohar Devadoss was decorated with the Padma Shri award by the president of India at the Rashtrapathi Bhavan in Delhi on Monday.

He was among many people who have distinguished themselves in various fields and are honoured annually.

Devadoss was chosen for the award for 2020 but the ceremony was put off due to the pandemic and clubbed with the decoration of the 2021 awardees.

Devadoss has been honoured for being an illustrator, designer and writer, best known for his intricate drawings of landmarks and ordinary life despite his failing eyesight in the past and continuing the effort despite his handicap.

He has also written a host of books, packed with his signature illustrations, the more famous being on Madurai. His latest book, Madras Inked was collaborated with architect Sujatha Sankar.

At his bungalow on Panpanasam Sivan Salai, Devadoss continues to engage in writing with the help of people. And is socially active, attending all social and community events of his liking.





Soora Samharam enactment at Sri Kapali Temple held in pouring rain

By S. Prabhu

Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple executive officer D. Kaveri was almost in tears just after 7pm on Wednesday after watching the performance of the Sripatham service personnel in their enactment of the Soora Samharam episode out in open yard.

If this was not devotion enough, they followed it up with the nake dance that moved the officer so much that she announced that they should be given a special sambhavanai for this devotional performance in the rain.

And she then handed out prasadam and sambhavanai to them soon after their inspiring performance.

Yes, there were people to watch all this. People who may have numbered 50 who are at the temple come rain or harsh sunshine or cyclone.

Soon after, the service personnel mounted Lord Singaravelar on the golden peacock.

Just after 7pm, the Lord went on the golden peacock vahana procession to the Navarathri mandapam.

The Thiru Kalyanam event of the Kanda Shasti utsavam was held on Thursday.



In pouring rain, with no rain shield to protect them, the Sripatham members were seen in great spirit and presented the Soora Samharam enactment for over half hour in the northern prakara of the temple complex.

The amazing life of Nalini 'aunty'

By Rishi Prabhakar

Dr. Nalini looks, on the face of it, like your quiet grandmother. On the contrary, she has survived many downs in life to notch some great achievements.

As a young girl, she says she wanted to be a surgeon but was not selected for this course. Her goals continued to be thwarted for years, but each time she continued pushing, while raising her sons.

The greatest hardship in her life came in 2009. Only 13 days after her first son got married, her second son had a nasty motorcycle accident and died.

Despite the terrible circumstances of this turn in life, Nalini Aunty (as we call her) persevered.

She decided to keep herself engaged in academics and applied for a doctoral programme.

At the age of 54, she studied via correspondence at BITS, Ranchi and a whole decade later, in 2019 got a PhD in management, with a thesis on 'Emotional Intelligence of female managers in the Services Sector'.

Nalini is currently president of the neighborhood association of Lakshmipuram.



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NEW PERFORMANCE SPACE LAUNCHED IN ALWARPET

By Our Staff Reporter

The first evening was a Carnatic music concert by Sanjay Subrahmanyam. It was sold out.

The next evening there was Arivu, singer, rapper and lyricist, best known for his 'Enjoy Enjammi' single. That too was sold out.

And B. Charles sat back to savour the great start to the opening of his pet project called Medai.

Medai is a Black Box performance space and Charles' space is located on the fringe of Alwarpet, in Co-Operative Colony, on the third floor of a building.

It is completely black inside, fitted with the best audio and lighting and can seat about 75 people, to give the guests the best experience of a performance.

"We can host any kind of performance," says Charles, who specialises in lighting live performances. "Be it music, dance, theatre, poetry readings or Open Mic."

Medai is perhaps the third such Black Box space in this part of the city. Charles says that on his many profes-



Charles

sional trips abroad he observed the Black Box spaces, learnt more about them and got inspired to set up one of his own.

And he turned to Sanjay Subrahmanyam to launch the space and that concert was sold out hours after online booking was announced - Sanjay was performing live after a long break of some 18 months, due to the

pandemic and he had all his passionate fans at Medai that evening.

Now, Charles has to work out ways to not only keep the place alive but also attract artistes and organisers to book the space and better this business, after having spent a bit on setting it up.

He is thankful to the promoters of Kauvery Hospitals for assuring support. "They liked the idea and have promised to be with me," says Charles who resides in K. K. Nagar.

So why did he choose this location in the city?

"There are lots of performances held in the Mylapore zone and so I opted for this venue because it can be central to people who attend events. People now pay to attend good shows and I hope we can be a happening venue."

Medai is at 1st Cross St., Co-operative Colony, Sri Ram Nagar, Alwarpet. Call Charles at 9841495497



This restaurant chain donated goodies for Deepavali

Photo: Mary Amutha



By Our Staff Reporter

Even as the promoter of the Nithya Amirtham restaurant and sweets store chain, K. Parthibhan got busy on the days leading to Deepavali, to cater to the steady stream of orders, he set aside some time to also cater to the less privileged.

There was a call from a NGO called Grace Trust that Mary Amutha runs, a call for some goodies that could be given to the handicapped and the poor in colonies on the fringe of the city.

Parthibhan got his team to ready boxes of assorted sweets and snacks and send them across. Among the people who received the goodies were the handicapped in Kan-

HOW BEST TO USE DRAINS, CANAL TO DEAL WITH FLOODING IN R. A. PURAM



By Our Staff Reporter

Monday, November 8 morning.

We are on the small bridge on Kamaraj Salai in R. A. Puram which runs across the Buckingham Canal.

The Canal was dredged some weeks ago (we notice fresh soil and waste piled up on the banks of the Canal).

But the rainwater since last Sunday rains is not really flowing furiously. Nor is the water level high. It appears as if the water is stagnating.

The pillars of the MRTS rail line structure run along the middle of this Canal. The waters flow south till they empty into the Adyar river.

On the other bank here, wild vegetation and domestic waste is seen.

Long ago, the huts hugging this Canal on its south side were removed. They almost sank in the waters in the 2015 deluge. This is Govindaswamy Nagar, once a grazing expanse when only a few houses dotted this side of R A Puram.

Though a court order directed that all illegal houses on both banks of the nagar be removed, action was not taken.

Community activists in R. A. Puram have previously said that if drains can empty flood waters into a cleared, deep Canal there will not be flooding in this area. Flooding did take place in many streets on Sunday.

Notes Dr. Chandrasekaran, founder of RAPRA, the local community body. "The 2015 flood was because of water let out from Chembarambakkam lake. This time, rainwater management was far better in our area. The reasons are: Recent desilting in Buckingham Canal. Building of new channel in 2nd Cross in 2018. Construction of 18 roadside RWH wells sponsored by RAPRA and dug in various streets - these have helped to drain water and also improved groundwater remarkably."

RAPRA wants more to be done. Here are some key issues.

1. Construction of drain in 6th Main Road (the only road in R. A. Puram without a channel)
2. Intense desilting in Adyar river mouth and improve the gradients of drains into the Canal for smooth flow.
3. As 2nd Cross Road drain is the major drain system in R.A.Puram, relaying this road by giving a good slope from 2nd Main Road upto the Canal near Canal Bank Road - 2nd Cross St. junction will improve drainage into Canal
4. Increase the bund on both sides of Canal and have urban forest which can prevent sliding of Canal bund.

nagi Nagar and the poor in Annai Sathya Nagar, where the NGO works.

"We have donated lunch packs in the past but since it was Deepavali we packed sweets this time around," said Parthibhan who manages the Nithya Amirtham restaurant on Mylapore's North Mada Street.

This is the group's first restaurant; a second was launched in Perambur. Their sweets and savouries stores are eight now, across the city, with a large and modern central kitchen opened recently in Nerukundram.

"Business has been good after the pandemic slowed down," says Parthibhan, who enjoys presenting new varieties of snacks and drinks at his restaurants.



MONSOON SCAPE

Chitrakulam

● CHITRAKULAM OVERFLOWS

The Chitrakulam, the temple tank to the south east of Sri Kapali Temple began to overflow since Thursday morning, with waters flowing out on all four sides of the tank.

The algae and vegetation-topped waters were seen flowing on to the narrow streets and at one point, lashed against the doorways of a few houses on the eastern side of this tank.

Said Malini Mannath, a resident here, "Our street was dry till yesterday but since this morning the tank waters are washing the street." Another resident said that if the steady rain continues houses fringing the tank are at risk of getting flooded.

Another resident said that this water was seen flowing into Appu Street.

● TEMPLE TANKS STORAGE RISES

The level of water in the tank of Sri Kapali Temple has been rising steadily as rain came down through the past week.

Rainwater falling on the streets around this tank flowed into the pipes that have outlets into the tank. In recent times, outlets were also built all along the east side of this tank so that water flowing on Tank Street would also be channeled into the tank.

Volunteers recently removed vegetation that had grown wild across the tank.

Water levels in other temple tanks has also risen high - at Sri Madhava Perumal Temple and at Sri Virupakseeswarar Temple.

● BIGTIME PROBLEM AREAS

There are at least three or four areas in the Mylapore zone which suffer badly when it rains heavily and at monsoon time.

The P. S. Sivaswami Salai area is the worst affected. This time, Traffic Police advised closure of traffic since the water level rose waist high.

Water from areas around this place seems to flow from all sides, making this a huge pond. And the flooding has taken place after repeated relaying of roads, new drains and such civic works.

Seethammal Colony in Alwarpet suffered very badly in the 2015 deluge. The residents are enduring that pain all over again. Water flooded all campuses here and entered houses. No SOS civic operation took place for next 24 hours. The TTK Road junction was also flooded so there was no where the water could flow down to.

Parts of R. A. Puram were flooded for over 24 hours. And this despite civic improvements that were made after the severe pain residents endured in the 2015 deluge. Yes, new drains saved the day for residents on some streets but at least two drains need to be built to address flooding, said RAPRA, a community body.



Scene on Venkatakrishna Road, Mandaveli

● COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Chennai Corporation opened community kitchens to cater food to people badly affected by the rain.

In Zone 9 (Teynampet zone under which most parts of Mylapore falls) food is being prepared at the GCC Community Hall located on Bharathidasan Road, near the library thrice a day - at 8am, 12pm and at 8pm.

Volunteers then transport the food to different points where the food is required by people and distribute it.



Water inside a R. A. Puram house

● PACK UP

When the rainwater entered their apartment complex located off TTK Road last Sunday and began to threaten ground floor residents, memories of the 2015 deluge began to hang over many residents.

Many began to arrange for alternate accommodation - even those who stay on the top floors here. They did not want to be left marooned in the waters.

Some have already moved into a hotel close-by while a few have shifted to homes of their relatives.

"When I had to walk to the gate to take a car I had to wade through high water levels," said one woman here who has moved to Anna Nagar.

Ration shop in Alwarpet flooded

