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July - Dec 2020 : 12 Pages

# Y NEWS

From **YOcee.in**

ePaper  
from children  
in the  
newsroom

## Interview with Ms. Shoba Raman, Best Principal Awardee of CBSE

**Sanjitha S**  
**September 5, 2020**

Ms. Shoba Raman, principal of Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Mylapore has won the Best Principal Award for the year 2019 from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). A teacher who loves creativity in her class, she talks about the importance of making learning fun. Sanjitha S, a Student Reporter of YOcee, spoke to her over the telephone and shares the conversation.

**Q:** How did you feel when you first received the news that you won the award ma'am?

**A:** I felt very validated because the selection process runs through four rounds. People used to tell that it is not easy to win that award. But I argued that it is only about hard work and truth. So, when I got the news, I felt as if I was approved as a good enough teacher with a lot of passion. The hard work I did and the truth I said paid off and that made me comfortable.

**Q:** Could you brief us about the award and also about its significance?

**A:** This award is given by CBSE to principals, vice-principals, and teachers at various categories like primary teachers, secondary, etc. I really respect this award as all the teachers are not put under the same category. The work of a primary teacher is much more difficult than my work as I teach semi-adults while they have to handle kids. You cannot compare both their works. That's not fair. That's one of the reasons why I wanted to apply for this award.

The second reason is that, it gives visibility to the school. Vidya Mandir has been doing so well for the past so many years but, nobody knew

about our school. So, I wanted somebody to look up and say, "Hey this is a lovely school down south and they are doing really well." This is a really nice award put forth to appreciate the work of the teacher.

**Q:** Tell us more about yourself, ma'am.

**A:** I started my teaching career after completing undergraduation. I first worked as an arts and crafts teacher. But art was only my hobby. Chemistry was my passion. So, I decided to do M.Sc, M.phill, B.Ed and M.Ed... After equipping myself with all the degrees I joined as a chemistry teacher in Vidya Mandir. Gradually, I became the vice-principal and then in 2014, I was appointed as the principal.

**Q:** Did you dream about taking up any other profession when you were studying in school?

**A:** When I was in school, my mind was full of art. I wanted to see Michelangelo's paintings and to paint like that. I also love travelling. So, I thought that all I should do was travel and draw and just live like that.

**Q:** Who inspired you to become a teacher?

**A:** My chemistry master inspired me. Mr. Balasubramiam was my chemistry teacher when I was in class 11 and 12. He was an amazing person. His class was like an adventure to me. I wanted to make my classes as interesting as his.

**Q:** As a teacher, what other awards have you received?

**A:** In 2004, I was the winner at the regional level and the runner up at the national level for an award for Teacher Excellence. A year later I applied for Fulbright Scholarship which was a national level award and it was conducted for the first time in India. Four teachers including me



were selected and we were given the opportunity to teach in a school in the U.S for six months. That was an amazing experience. It transformed me into a better teacher. I saw how teaching was done there and only after that, fun started to become an important aspect of my teaching. I wanted my students to enjoy my class and remember me as a good teacher who gave them a good time in school.

**Q:** In what ways do you encourage creativity in class?

**A:** I always believe that learning with peers is the best way to learn. So, I make sure that there is some sort of fun stuff in each lesson. Some lessons lead to a role play. We also play dumb charades and J.A.M in our chemistry class. For example, in dumb charades, Hund's Rule is given. Then you immediately have to act out the rule or mime it. Who will forget the rule after that!

**Q:** The classes are now online due to the pandemic. What were the challenges that you faced while launching the classes online?

**A:** We launched the online classes with TCS digital classrooms. We, teachers, explored and learnt to use that technology in the month of April. We got trained in the TEAMS app for three

(Continued on page 3)

# Illustrated talk on Temples of Madras – A Madras Week talk by Dr Chithra Madhavan

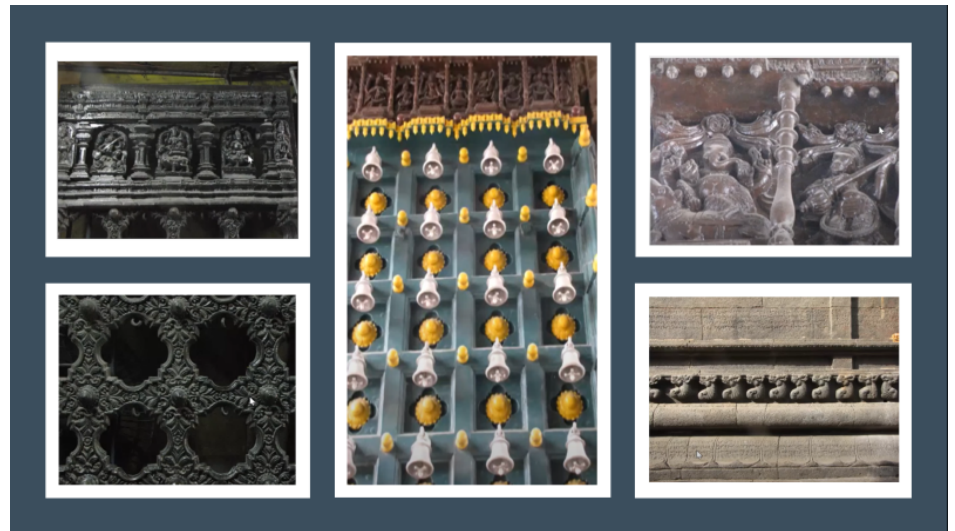
the glory of the Hindu temples in and known cultural and mythical history.

**Smruthi Chandrasekar**  
**September 20, 2020**

The Madras Week this year was celebrated no less than others despite the Covid-19 situation. People from across the city have enthusiastically taken initiatives to conduct workshops and lectures online. The Temples of Madras – is one such online lecture by Dr. Chithra Madhavan, which took place on August 20, 2020.

Dr. Chithra Madhavan has an M.A. and M.Phil. from the Department of Indian History, University of Madras, and a Ph.D. from the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Mysore. She is the recipient of two post-doctoral fellowships from the Department of Culture, Government of India, and from the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi. Dr. Chithra is a guest lecturer at many institutions in Chennai, such as Kalakshetra Foundation, the Arts Management programme of Dakshin Chitra, and the Asian College of Journalism. She frequently delivers lectures on heritage-related topics in various places in India. She has also authored around seven books that mainly talk about the cultural and historical background of the country.

The lecture on August 20, 2020, lasted for an hour and a half, showcasing



around Chennai city. The session was on Zoom and YouTube with around 150 participants of all age Cultural Heritage (INTACH) – Chennai Chapter groups. The Indian Trust for Art and had organised the lecture.

Throughout the presentation, Dr. Chithra displayed a deep appreciation for the art and history of the temple and the architecture and the workmanship in them. She covered mainly four of the prominent temples in and around the city, namely; Kapaleeshwarar temple, Mylapore, Parthasarathy Swami temple, Triplicane, Adhi Pureeswarar temple, Thiruvottriyoar and Marundeeswarar temple, Thiruvannmyur. Though these temples are quite infamous for their rich processions and the large crowds that attend them, the lecture was an insight into their lesser-

Dr. Chithra said, “In the rush that we enter and exit a temple, often times we miss out on the intricacy and the work on the temple doors”. She was extremely child friendly, so much that she narrated stories of the past that grasped the attention of not only young viewers but older ones too. In the due course of her presentation, one could learn the reason behind the various entries and exits a temple has, why and how temples got the name they possess today, the position of different idols and the significance of their positions, statues and different forms of the same statue, the chariots and procession deities and incredible historical pieces of evidence derived from inscriptions on walls, pillars and ceilings. She even compared a few sculptures in the temple at Thiruvottriyoar to those in Hampi.

In the end, she also encouraged a question-answer session which showcased the audiences' keen interest in the subject. Her incredible knowledge in the field and most importantly the rich culture and heritage this city possesses proved an eye-opener to many of the participants.

Renowned dancer and choreographer Revathi Ramachandran, Director of Kalakshetra, gave the vote of thanks to the talk.

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# Chaat – Homemade and delivered at doorstep

**Sthuthi Arun**

**September 3, 2020**

If you live in Mylapore, Mandaveli or Adyar, you can now relish homemade chaat, ordered from the convenience of your home.

Apoorva Gayathri is a young woman who recently completed her MBA finance at Chennai Business School. But little did she know that she would be starting her own chaat shop!

Now a resident of Rani Meyyamai Towers in MRC Nagar-Raja Annamalai Puram, Apoorva says, “We used to stay in Hyderabad for 20 years, and chaat is a very common snack and has a unique taste. We used to eat it every other day. That is what inspired us to start making chaat at home. We had talked about it many a time, but it was never seriously discussed as a business. So, we decided to kick-start our dreams of opening a chaat shop during the pandemic, when everyone was looking for something homemade and hygienic.” She makes the chaat with her mother Radha and delivers it to the homes of the customers. Her father, Rameshkumar, is a chartered accountant and handles the accounts. Apoorva instantly named the business ‘R R Let’s Chaat’ after her mother Radha and father Rameshkumar.

“As orders started pouring in, we realised that delivering to home would help the start-up to take to the next level. We began delivering to three places – Mylapore, Mandaveli, and Adyar. My dad helps me in packaging, and my driver and I



deliver the orders,” she says.

## Making use of free time

“After completing my MBA, I was looking out for a job, was waiting for an offer letter from the company she had applied for. However, this got delayed due to the prevalent situation. “I didn’t want to sit idle at home. My mom too needed something to look forward to. Also, making chaat is far easier than making an elaborate lunch or dinner. We could do it quickly and in a large volume.” She plans to tie-up with food delivery apps like Swiggy and Zomato shortly and later start her own eatery. She says, “After a year we plan to start our restaurant. Once we do that, we will increase our menu to both North and South Indian cuisines, for my mom is a versatile cook.” As of now, the mother-daughter duo makes only chaat items.

Starting a homemade business is no piece of cake. “We started in our apartment in MRC Nagar and were overwhelmed by the number of orders. It was 99 orders in the first week and we had a few initial difficulties, but within a week, we overcame it. We had to start early to make the chaat in large quantities and maintain the taste. So, we finish all the household work by 11

am and start preparing chaat after that. We complete all the cooking and mixing of chaats by 3.30 p.m. and start delivering after that,” says Apoorva.

## Plans for the future

She plans to personally participate in her chaat business until she gets her job offer. “Once I get placed, I will keep someone as a helper for my mother. We started this because my mother is used to doing a lot of work and wanted to be active even when life was standstill around us due to the universal crisis. And once I go to work, this business will keep her mind occupied.”

The small business now receives an average of 150 orders a day. Customers will have to order a day in advance and can order on all days except Tuesdays and Wednesdays. To order, call +91 9600066474.



*(Continued from page 1)*

days. The teachers of each subject department collaborated their work in such a way that in the month of May, the PowerPoint presentations for nine lessons were completed, so we need not worry till the end of September. All the teachers were such good sports and they all put in a lot of effort and I would say that so far, we have done a good job with online classes.

Q: What is the best and worst part of teaching, according to you?

A: The best part is when your students come back after a year or two and say that they had a blast in your class. The worst part is when you are not able to convince the parents that their wards are not into science. The students would be forced to take up science groups and you also are unable to help them. That is really a sad thing.

Q: For this teacher’s day, what message

would you like to convey to other teachers?

A: I would say, please make your class so interesting that you see the spark in your student’s eyes. You shouldn’t make them feel bored. If you think even for a second you are boring them, change tactics. Tell something totally tangent and get back their attention. Make good justice. You are a teacher, and your subject must be your passion.



# Are schools ready to reopen for senior classes in Chennai?

**Ankur Chandrasekar**  
**September 15, 2020**

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India has issued guidelines for partial reopening of schools for students of classes 9 to 12 on a voluntary basis, last week. It mentions that students of these classes can visit their schools and take guidance from their teachers from Sep. 21, 2020, taking all preventive measures.

The permission to reopen school activities partially does not apply to schools in containment zones. All activities in the outdoor such as assemblies, sports and events are not permitted under the guidelines.

## Students

While visiting schools by students is voluntary it is subject to written consent from parents or guardians. Many parents are surprised at the announcement and expressed that they were not yet convinced to send their children to school. Vidya, mother of 15-year-old Rohit who is now in class 10 in Adyar neighbourhood in Chennai says, "I do not want to take any chance on the health of my son, even though it is his board year."

Rohit says, "I discussed with a few friends and we feel that this permission to visit the school will help us to a great extent to clarify our doubts with teachers. If my

school adopts a shift system and allows a limited number of students in every session, I would like to go to school."

Another student, who does not wish to be named, is in class 12 in a CBSE school in Arumbakkam. She is concerned about the practical sessions in the laboratory. "The practical exams in board get us good marks. It will be good if schools call students only for practical classes. We have adapted to online classes for theory." Two of her friends, however, are not yet ready to resume her school visits. One of them says, "We have been safe at home all these three months from June and the pandemic has not ended yet. There are chances of getting affected is still high. When all gets well, we can even have daily practical sessions close to our board exams. I would now stay away from going to school, as it is voluntary and we have the option of remote learning."

Schools in Chennai are yet to receive any communication regarding reopening any time sooner. A few newspapers reported that schools are likely to be reopened from Oct. 5, 2020. However, Tamil Nadu School Education Minister K.A. Sengottaiyan has said that no decision has been taken yet in this regard and will be announced to the public when the government decides.

## Students of class 10 to 12 can visit schools soon

**Team YOCee**  
**September 28, 2020**

Tamil Nadu Government has issued Standard Operating Procedure permitting students of class 10 to 12 to visit schools on a voluntary basis from Oct. 1, 2020.

The order was issued on Sep. 24, 2020, taking into consideration the Govt. of India's guidelines issued on Sep. 8, 2020 reopening schools for students of class 9 to 12 for taking guidance from teachers.

The guidelines suggest division of students into two batches to visit schools on alternate days and teachers to work for 2 days each in batches. Safe distancing has to be maintained and schools should consider utilising outdoor open spaces for teacher-student interactions, the guidelines insist.

All other precautions such as thermal scanning of students and staff, cleaning hands, wearing masks have to be strictly adhered to.

Students from containment zones are not permitted to visit their schools. The online classes shall be continued.

## Ease of restrictions in Tamil Nadu State and Chennai from Sep. 1, 2020

**Team YOCee**  
**August 31, 2020**

After 170 days since the first lockdown due to COVID 19 outbreak was announced, Tamil Nadu state has relaxed the restrictions under Unlock 4 from Sep. 1, 2020

The e-pass requirement to travel within the state has been done away with. However, people travelling from other states have to apply and obtain e-pass to travel to Tamil Nadu. State-owned and private Buses will resume operations.

Relaxations also permit shopping malls and parks to open.

All places of worship will be open from Sep. 1, 2020. Special trains within the state and Metro Rail services will be operational from Sep. 7, 2020. Hotels and resorts will be open for the public, but tourist places such as Ooty and Kodaikanal will allow tourists only with an e-pass from the respective district collectors.

No relaxation has been announced for opening, schools, colleges, cinema halls,

amusement parks, swimming pools, museums and zoos.

All the permissions are subject to revised standard operating procedures put forth by the state. While announcing the relaxations, chief minister K. Palaniswami reiterated that all precautions including wearing masks, safe-distancing and washing hands need to be followed in order to safeguard from the virus.

# Hamsanadam Music School celebrates its Silver Jubilee online

**Sthuthi Arun**  
August 19, 2020

September is a very buzzing month at Hamsanadam Music School every year. The music school founded by musician Dr. Shubha Ganesan is located in Norton 1st Street, Mandaveli, Chennai 600028. It is the time when the institution celebrates the anniversary since its founding in 1995.

This year 2020, the school is celebrating its Silver Jubilee year. "As we are completing our 25 years this year, we had plans of celebrating the event in a grand manner as we have been celebrating our anniversary in the past, in a public auditorium with all our students. But due to this pandemic, we have proposed to conduct the events online through our YouTube channel. The celebrations started in the first week of July with our senior students performing concerts. This will be on till November. Amidst this concert series, we have also planned concert performances for Vinayaka Chaturthi, Navaratri and so on," says Dr. Shubha Ganesan.

## The founder

Dr. Shubha Ganesan is a disciple of Sangeetha Kalanidhi Dr. M.L.Vasanthakumari and Padmabhushan awardee and Sangitha Kalanidhi Madurai T.N.Seshagopalan. She is 'A' Grade artist of Doordarshan and All India Radio, Chennai. She is the daughter of Mridangam vidwan Karaikkudi V.M.Ganesan, who was a professor at the Music Department, Annamalai University and her mother a senior veena artiste Kalyani Ganesan is an 'A' Top graded artist of All India Radio, Chennai and retired Professor of Veena from Tamil Nadu Govt. Music



Dr. Shubha Ganesan in concert



Shubha felicitating parents Mridangam vidwan Karaikkudi V.M.Ganesan and Veena artiste Kalyani Ganesan

College. Shubha is also the granddaughter of reputed mridanga vidwan Karaikkudi Muthu Iyer. belonging to the rich musical lineage, Shubha is inspired to become a musician as well.

## Silver Jubilee celebrations

The 25th year celebrations of Hamsanadam Music school have begun with the launching live concerts every Sunday on the school's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq6-H3OIYMHmSoM1Bq7Bxrw>. So far, three students of Dr. Shubha Ganesan have performed concerts online.

"I thank my guru for giving me the opportunity to present a program in the Sunday Kutcheri series. We have learnt many things especially about manodharma – a form of Carnatic music created on the spot- from Ma'am in our classes. I always admire her dedication and patience while

teaching us," says Sudharshana, a senior student of Hamsanadam, who recently participated in one such concert.

Another senior student of the institution, Varsha

says, "The Sunday Kutcheri initiative taken by my guru Kalaimamani Dr. Shubha Ganesan has motivated me to take up music more seriously and to practise more. We also got a glimpse of the various types of hurdles a performer has to overcome in order to elicit the desired output."

## The plans ahead

During the last few months, regular face-to-face classes have not been happening owing to the pandemic situation. "Planning for direct classes is uncertain as of now. Students are also feeling apprehensive to attend face-to-face classes. However, I have been teaching online since 2015 for students across the world; so it is not a new venture for us. But teaching neighborhood students is a new experience altogether. The students are really comfortable learning from their homes, and this is also safer in the current situation,"

says the founder Shubha Ganesan.

## Shubha online classes

Prior to the lockdown, Hamsanadam Music School conducted regular classes at the premises of Akshara playschool, Mylapore.

For more details, contact: +91 91761 97223, or visit <https://www.facebook.com/Hamsanadam-Music-School-of-Dr-Shubha-Ganesan-101799674917155/>



# Spreading smiles through chocolates

**Shalini Ramesh**  
August 3, 2020

Moving on from their previous mission – 100 tonnes of rice and pulses to the needy during the lockdown, two brothers, Jai and Preet Aswani with their mother Varsha, are now spreading smiles on the faces of the frontline warriors across India in a sweet way.

Born 2 Win Foundation, a non-profit organisation the brothers and their mother have founded, is partnering with another organisation Sankalp – Beautiful World, which supports people who fight against cancer, for this endeavour. They have roped in Mars India to supply chocolates to the Born 2 Win Foundation, which are then organised and sent to old-age homes, orphanages, pet shelters, doctors, policemen and women, housekeeping staff, drivers and to frontline workers, as a way of honouring and saluting their efforts. The entire program is co-ordinated by the members of the foundation from their own homes.

So far, 11 cities pan India have each received about 1 lakh of chocolates from this Foundation. Members of the Foundation follow strict rules such as social distancing, sanitisation and protection when distributing the goodies.

"I spend three hours a day on my online schooling, and I devote the rest of my time to the foundation," says 14-year-old Preet Aswani who is a co-founder of Born 2 Win Foundation along with his brother and mother.

Recently on the World Chocolate Day, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Law & order), Mylapore District in Chennai city, H. Jayalakshmi received bunches of Snickers chocolates, which were distributed to women police personnel, as a special tribute to the services in the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Jai Aswani, the elder of the two brothers, who wishes to pursue his Bachelors in Social Work, handles most of the tech-related work, while his brother Preet and mother Varsha, help co-ordinate the projects in different cities.

"It feels good when well-wishers and relatives ask our help to donate rice or pulses on their birthdays to orphanages and shelter homes," says Varsha Aswani, Managing Trustee of the foundation.

Recently, Dr. Kiran Bedi, Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry, conducted a webinar with a select 28 children pan India, and Jai and Preet were among them. Preet had realised that masks were running out in all the medical shops, and he took inspiration from Dr Bedi's video. He made a poster – 'Make your own mask', which was shown to all – live. At the end of the session, 12 children were handpicked to



Dr. Kiran Bedi, Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry, with the poster made by Preet Aswani on the importance of wearing a mask.

receive special recognition. Preet Aswani was one of them.

"From her video, I have learnt that social responsibility is not a choice, but let's make it fun..." says Preet, in a YouTube video, as he goes on to show how to make a simple mask at home.

The family of sons and mom has received many awards recognising their efforts towards the greater good. On July 28, 2020, Born2Win foundation received the Global Humanitarian Award – Stars of COVID, from the World Humanitarian Drive.

"No one is you, and that is your superpower," said Jai Aswani in a telephonic interview earlier. He and his brother are now a nation-wide inspiration to all teenagers, and that age is just a number.

What lays behind us and what lays in front of us is insignificant. It is what is in us that matters.





## Sargam Choir commemorates Gandhiji on his birth anniversary

Medha R  
October 3, 2020

Sargam choir decided to celebrate Gandhi Jayanthi with a musical tribute by children. The tribute was online this year.

A group of children were trained to render 'Vaishnava jana to', the song that evokes the memory of Bapuji. This song is said to have been written in the 15th century by the famous poet Narasimha Mehta. The meaning of the song goes like this:

Call those people Vaishnav who  
Feel the pain of others,  
Help those who are in misery,  
But never let pride enter their mind.

This song is one of the favourite hymns of the freedom fighters before the independence of India. This song is also much relevant in this COVID-19 times.

Sargam choir is the brainchild of Dr.Sudha Raja who trains adults and kids, not the usual traditional classical and devotional songs, but folk, patriotic, secular songs spanning 14 Indian languages. Harmony is juxtaposed in Indian music.

As online is the new normal, Dr.Sudha Raja decided to launch this as a Youtube video online. She chose seven young singers ranging from 4 and 1/2 years to 9 years. And taught them the song Vaishnava jana to with meanings of the lyrics as the song is in Gujarati. She says, "When a song



is edified with the meaning the children can soulfully render the song."

She taught them the song two days before Gandhi Jayanthi. Later, she asked each student to record their video and send them to her. "I decided the dress code to be maroon and asked them to dress up in that colour. The children were really excited to be part of the choir." Dr. Sudha Raja says.

The tiny tots who participated in the choir are Avanthika, Maya, Ananya, Laya, Adith, Ishika, and Aaradhya.

The children who sang the song sent the videos to her another student Sudharshanam Balaji, who beautifully organised them and uploaded the video on Youtube. "Sudharshanam Balaji used to be a part of YOCee, when he was in school," Dr. Sudha Raja informs.

Dr. Sudha Raja shared her experience of training the children and making the video as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, with this reporter over the phone.



## Remembering Mahatma Gandhi on Independence Day

Team YOCee  
August 15, 2020

Dhakshana Vel P, studying in 7th grade in Sharanalaya Montessori, Akkarai, Chennai remembered a photograph he shot a year ago to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on this year's Independence Day.



During the Photowalk held on the occasion of Madras Week last year (2019), a group of children was taken along the Beach Road starting from Dare House in Parrys. In a building, tucked away inside the General Post Office, Dhakshana Vel found a statue of Gandhiji. He clicked a picture and promptly made a digital poster for Independence Day this year.

Dhakshana Vel is a photography enthusiast and loves his camera.



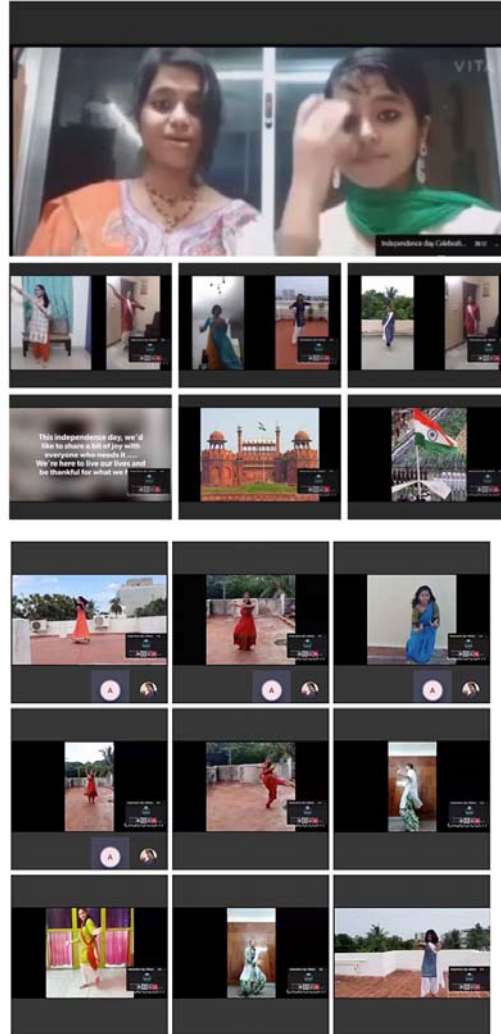
## Vidya Mandir celebrates Independence Day online this year

**Sthuthi Arun**  
**August 15, 2020**

The 74th independence Day celebration in Vidya Mandir School, Mylapore took place online this year. The pandemic and the eventual lockdown took the celebrations to the homes of the students virtually. The event was organised by the students of class 12.

The celebrations began with the flag hoisting by the school principal Mrs. Shobha Raman. After the school prayer, a series of dance and music performance by the students followed online. Students shared the recorded sessions with the school and the teachers scheduled the events and played them online for all the students of the school.

The celebrations ended with a rendition of the customary patriotic song 'Vande Mataram.' Many students and parents expressed that the event was beautifully organised and was a treat to the eyes.



## Flag hoisting with a creative twist

**Team YOCee**  
**August 15, 2020**

Bharanitharan S, studying in 9th standard in A. M. M Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Chennai was missing a grand Independence Day celebration in school this, like many other children. So, he decided to celebrate the day at home.

When everyone is home-bound and not going out for any public gathering, he thought of hoisting the flag too inside his home. He sat down to make a flag mast, decorate it and hoist it



on his own!

"I took a PVC Pipe and decorated it with fairy lights. I tied a flag to the PVC pole with a woolen thread. I filled the flag with rose petals and hoisted my flag," says Bharanitharan.

Creativity knows no lockdown.

## Three Chennai metro stations renamed after Annadurai, MGR and Jayalalithaa

**Team YOCee**  
**August 1, 2020**

The Tamil Nadu government issued an order to rename three Metro stations in Chennai on July 31, 2020. Alandur Metro to be renamed as Arignar Anna Alandur Metro, Central Metro as Puratchi Thalaivar Dr M G Ramachandran Metro & CMBT Metro as Puratchi Thalaivi Dr J Jayalalithaa CMBT Metro. The chief minister of Tamil Nadu said that the stations are named after three past chief ministers of the state.

The Chennai Metro Rail commenced its services by operating a 10 km line between Koyambedu and Alandur in June 2015. the route now runs across 41 stations, of which 19 are underground stations and 12 are elevated stations. The network covers 45.1 km across the city.





# Body Image. What does that mean?

**Shalini Ramesh**

**August 1, 2020**

We are all Unique. What is the point of everyone looking the exact same?

It is the perception that you have of your physical self and the thoughts and feelings that result from themselves. It basically means, that when you look into a mirror, you should be able to say 'I am perfect just the way I am.'

I am sure that very few people will be able to do this. Honestly? Neither can I.

Sometimes I wish I was taller. I wish I had skin that wasn't sensitive. I wish that my front tooth is not chipped. I wish for a lot of things. I'm sure you do too. But the good news is, no one is perfect. Everyone has his/her flaws. That's just how humans were made.

I ask you this. Who set the standards



of what it takes to be pretty? Who decided that boys should be muscular, and girls thin? Who decided these stereotypes? The answer? We. We, humans, have created these so-called 'standards' and people who meet that are perfect, and others aren't?

So what if you are fat? They think you are ugly? Well, they can cover their eyes. You have the same rights as everyone else.

What if your skin is dark? It doesn't mean your personality is as dark as your skin! If they have a problem with that, I think they should try to sort it out. (Though, I guess they are really just jealous)

Don't body shame yourself. When you make harsh comments about your body, it feels worse than having someone say it to you. Trust me. I know.

Instead, try replacing your harsh comments with good ones. I'll start. I like my brown hair. It makes me unique from all the blackheads. I like my muscles, as they are strong. See? Not so hard!

If you don't like something about yourself, just accept it.

We are all in this together. Let's see how many of you are able to take up the challenge.

Comment down below, what you think makes you, well YOU. It could be a physical attribute or a part of your personality.

Remember, beauty comes from within!

# Yoga: the art of being

**Smruthi Chandrasekar**

**July 17, 2020**

The 21st of June every year is celebrated as the international day of yoga and this year marked the 6th anniversary of the initiative. Until last year, people of all age groups got together in parks and community halls to perform yogasanas, kriyas, pranayama and meditation, noting the importance and benefits of practicing Yoga. However, this year, owing to the novel coronavirus and strict social distancing norms, citizens were not allowed to gather in public places to celebrate this day.

Although this year has been different, people and organisations had taken up the initiative to spread awareness on the importance and benefits of practicing yoga. The Ministry of Ayush conducted a video blogging contest on the theme "MY LIFE MY YOGA" or "Jeevan Yoga" from the confines of the homes of citizens through which they showcased their commitment and interest in performing yoga as a part of their daily routine. The contest was applicable to participants of all age groups and



categories such as children, youth and adults and further into gender and level of excellence. The videos had to be for a duration of 3 minutes with a description of how the respective asanas/ kriyas/ pranayama had benefitted them. The ministry also conducted virtual lectures by renowned yoga practitioners on Sunday.

The Union culture minister Prahallad Singh Patel urged all citizens to perform Surya namaskar (salutation to the sun god) on International yoga day and took to social media with the hashtag #10millionSuryaNamaskar, in the hope that

10 million citizens would join him in the effort. The Ministry of Culture celebrated International Yoga Day 2020 by organising a campaign Namaste Yoga from June 19 to 21, 2020 to achieve the goal of making yoga an indispensable part of everyone's life.

As humans, we start performing yoga right from the mother's womb to crawling as a toddler, after which we forget the art of calming the mind amidst the bends and brakes that life throws at us. During this pandemic, especially, it is important to keep mental good physical health and mental health as well. Yoga is the key to accomplishing both. As said by the Prime Minister, Yoga has emerged as a force of unity, deepens the bond of humanity and most importantly, improves immunity.

# PSBB Schools pay e-tribute to Mrs. YGP

**Smruthi Chandrasekar**  
September 4, 2020

The students of PSBB Group of Schools have come together during this pandemic to pay homage to their late dean and director dear Mrs. YGP, through a series of YouTube episodes.

Mrs. Rajalakshmi Parthasarathy, a renowned educationalist and known dearly as Mrs.YGP to her students had passed away on August 6, 2019. As a mark of respect and a way of paying tribute on the first anniversary to this revered teacher and educationist, her students, both studying currently and alumni have initiated the PSBB VIDYASHAKTI, on YouTube.

PSBB VIDHYASHAKTI is a month-long tribute which will culminate on September 5, which is celebrated as Teachers' Day all over India, thus paying a befitting offering to Guru Mrs. YGP.

The first episode was released on August 6, 2020 at 5.30 p.m. with the first memorial speech given by the honorable



Vice President of India, Shri Venkaiah Naidu. The lecture was followed by cultural programs and tributes, after which the release of Coffee table book titled 'The Woman of our Lives', authored by PSBB alumnus Mr. Steve Bogaria took place.

Mrs. YGP has been the driving force behind the success of the well-known group of institutions; PSBB Group of Schools. She is an unforgettable and ever inspiring superstar to her students and teachers. To those who knew her, she had been an enthusiastic and compassionate figure. Age did not curtail her childlike curiosity and exuberance. She would make her presence loved and much-awaited. She was the first

woman to encourage the importance of integrating education with arts, sports and extracurricular activities which has had a transformative impact on the lives of many of her students and in their journey to success.

The month-long unveiling of one new episode a day gives a glimpse of her motivating and inspiring success story and how she impacted the lives of numerous people in leading them compassionately through their journey. Although not physically present around, students of PSBB consider her to be a guiding force, an icon of culture and values, a mentor of value and a loving friend.

The videos are here - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-CocNiwOMzRI-kkWzokBgA>

## Switch on Kalvi Tholaikatchi channel for classes

**Team YOCee**  
Ji;u 15, 2020

Learning goes to the television in Tamil Nadu. The education channel Kalvi Tholaikatchi had started streaming lessons for the schools that follow the State Board syllabus.



The channel which was launched last year around this time has come in handy for the state to telecast lessons during this COVID-19 times. All the schools in Tamil Nadu have announced that the classes will be online. For state-run and state-aided schools, the government has put up the lessons on television. The schools have already distributed textbooks to students.

Kalvi Tholaikatchi television channel is available through various cable and digital

service providers. The channel telecasts lessons for classes 1 to 12 and specialised lessons for students taking NEET and JEE exams. The website has information about the weekly telecast schedule for various classes.

Students who are unable to watch the channel or have missed any of the sessions can watch the pre-recorded video lessons on the YouTube channel.

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On  
31 January 2021

# Terrace garden thrives with home compost; yields varieties of greens and flowers

**Sthuthi Arun**  
September 29, 2020

This lockdown has been a very productive time for V.V. Kalavathy. A resident of Narasimhapuram, Mylapore, she decided to try out something 'out of the box.' For the past ten years, Kalavathy has been growing flowering plants and veggies on her rooftop. This was during the time she was working in Tamil Nadu Archives Department. She retired as Research Officer in the year 2017. Though she has been nurturing her home garden for quite a few years, since the lockdown, she had a lot of free time on her hands. So, she started growing 12 different varieties of keerai (spinach).

Ms. Kalavathy says, "Many buy vegetables from outside. But no one knows what chemicals are used while growing them. But if we are self-sufficient and grow our own fruits and vegetables, we know where and how it is grown." She has grown various varieties of spinach such as Paruppu keerai, Vendhaya keerai, Murunga keerai, Thandu keerai, Mudakathan keerai and many more during the lockdown months. In addition to this, she also grows vegetables like tomato, green chilli, brinjal, and okra (vendakkai), which she uses in her everyday cooking.

For any garden, fertilizers are a must. But Kalavathy never buys her fertilizers from outside. Instead, she makes them at home. "Bio enzymes are the best organic fertilizers. They can even be used for washing vessels and clothes, wiping and mopping floors, and even as a handwash," she says. To prepare bio enzymes, Kalavathy adds three cups of fruit peels, one cup of jaggery, and six cups of water. She soaks the fruit peels and jaggery in a vessel. After this, she keeps it in an airtight container in a shady area for 2-3 months. "I have been using this method for a while now, and it's really effective. I used it for my



flowers and saw results the very next day," she adds.

## Biogas plant

In addition to all this, Kalavathy also has her own biogas plant. She busts some common myths. She says, "Two years ago, I too had many doubts and questions



regarding biogas. Because we use so many items like cow dung, kitchen waste, etc, our perception is that it might stink a lot. Also, we cook with this fuel. So I approached Mr. Jagadish, the owner of Tamilnadu Biogas, and he helped me set up my own biogas plant at home. I later understood that there was no stench and the blue flame that came out was very efficient." She also

collects the excess water from the biogas plant from another outlet and uses it for watering the plants in her terrace garden.

Ms. Kalavathy advises all who wish to start their rooftop garden to never be discouraged. "Once, I added too much fertilizer for my favourite jasmine plant and it couldn't survive. I was disappointed, but never gave up," she recollects. She also says that the soil should be loose enough for water to seep into the roots, and encourages all households to use composting techniques. "It doesn't take much effort to make compost. Just add dry leaves, cow dung, kitchen waste, and cocopeat in a bin and leave it in a shady place for two months. It has two advantages – reduced garbage and good manure for plants," she says. Overall, she says that she gained a lot of experience from a gardening and biogas perspective

She uses the home-grown greens and vegetable for her family and shares any surplus with her neighbours. Want to take tips on home gardening, composting and growing your own food? Contact Ms. Kalavathy at +91 9444258021.

Have a tour on this Terrace Garden : <https://youtu.be/50I8METj85s>



# The Travel Industry and the Coronavirus outbreak

**Hussain Topiwala**  
July 17, 2020

The coronavirus, otherwise known as the COVID-19, has appalled the entire world with its devastating impacts on all sectors of the global economy. Yet the tertiary sector and specifically the travel industry within it remains the worst affected. As the coronavirus continues to remain unleashed, the list of people who are losing their jobs seems endless.

Within the global travel industry, nearly 50 million jobs are at risk, as reported by the World Travel and Tourism Council. Of the 50 million jobs that could be lost, around 30 million would be in Asia, seven million in Europe, five million in the Americas and, the rest in other continents. A major setback in the global economy remains unavoidable as an overwhelming number of jobs remain at risk and as a multitude of people in the aforementioned industry continues to lose their jobs.

What is the travel industry, what is its significance and why has COVID-19 affected it so severely?

The travel industry is one of the largest service industries in the world, an increasingly important one in the modern age. It is centered on the movement of people from one location to another, as well as the services they require along the way and is closely linked to the hospitality industry and the hotel industry, among others.

The travel industry as a whole is constituted of numerous sectors and sub-sectors, such as transportation (which includes the airline industry, railways, water transport, car rental, etc.), accommodation (which includes hotels, hostels, camping, cruises, etc.), entertainment (which includes tourist guides and tours, shopping, etc.) and many such sectors.

According to the World Bank, the share of the travel industry in the global economy as of 2018 was over 1400 billion dollars. This figure has plummeted downwards since the outbreak of the COVID-19, leaving behind a detrimental impact on the global economy.

Therefore, it can be seen that the travel industry plays a very important role in the economy, as well as each one of our lives, acting as a quasi-interface between us and our day-to-day activities. And hence, the revival of the travel industry requires the aid and contribution of each one of you, which can be done by simply understanding the problems and hardships faced by people involved in it and are waging a war to ensure their survival



amidst these testing times.

What are the problems that the travel industry is facing?

In India, a complete lockdown had been imposed by the government to prevent the further

spread of COVID-19. As a result of the lockdown, the movement of people was completely restricted, which adversely affected the travel industry.

Train services were not available, flights stopped operating, hotels were shut down, and a multitude of other states and nations too entered into a complete lockdown. Because of this, people did not have the choice to travel, either for leisure or for business, but to only wait for the lockdown to be lifted. However, even after the lockdown was lifted partially in India and completely in many other nations, people could not travel, or in most cases, even refused to travel. This was because of five reasons:

While the lockdown had been partially lifted in India, people could still not travel to other nations, because numerous countries were still under lockdown and were not open to tourists or visitors.

Even if other countries had come out of the lockdown, people were subjected to medical tests before they could travel; and they could travel only if they were asymptomatic.

In a majority of instances, people refused leisure travel because most of them had suffered adverse financial losses and were not willing to do anything that would affect their financial security.

Employed people too refused to travel, fearing a lay-off from their organization, which would further decrease their sense of financial and job security.

Finally, the main reason why people refused to travel was the fear of contracting the coronavirus during their travel or losing their dear ones for the same reason.

The travel industry is one of the most dynamic industries, whose existence depends only upon the movement of people. However, due to the reasons mentioned above, the travel industry has suffered a major downfall in its overall growth.

The travel industry accounts for 12.75% of employment – 5.56% of it direct and 7.19% indirect. Over 87 million people were employed in the tourism industry in 2018-'19, according to the Ministry of Tourism's annual report for 2019-'20. However, this number has

drastically reduced in the fiscal year of 2020, with people either losing their jobs or taking up new jobs in an attempt to find a new means of survival and remuneration.

How can the travel industry be revived?

The first and foremost step that should be taken to ensure the revival of the travel industry (which will in turn help in stabilizing the economy) is by taking measures to sensitize the masses of India about the dramatic impacts of the COVID-19 on this industry, as well as educating them about this industry. This can be done by organizing campaigns that illustrate the measures that have been taken by the government to ensure the safety of travelers.

This will in turn help in boosting the confidence of people to travel, publishing articles and reports in newspapers which will aid in sensitizing the masses to the issue at hand, and creating online petitions that will result in targeting a wider number and variety of people. All these measures must be immediately taken by the government to ensure the immediate revival of the travel industry to prevent bankruptcy and millions of unprecedented layoffs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH) has recommended: "a complete deferment for twelve months of all statutory dues payable by tourism, travel and hospitality industry at the central government, states and municipal governments level without attracting any penal interest". The FAITH has also recommended the setup of a Tourism COVID 19 Relief fund to be by the RBI or the Ministry of Finance or Tourism to support salaries and establishment costs. The industry estimates the value of the fund to be a minimum of Rs 50,000 crore which is almost equal to gross banking credit to the Indian tourism industry. These recommendations of the FAITH must also be taken immediately into consideration by the government.

While the revival and safeguarding of the travel industry must be one of the priorities of the government, it must also be realized that you, the readers of this report too share a role in this. The revival of the travel industry can be possible only by understanding the tough times people engaged in the travel industry are facing and try to help them sail through this weather. The aim of this writing too has been to create this sense of mutual understanding. After all, we are on the same boat, and hence, we must take all possible measures to keep this boat from sinking.