



GNC

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 5
JULY 2015

CONNECT

FOR MEMBERS OF THE GANDHINAGAR CLUB ONLY

HOT SUMMERS.
CONCRETE JUNGLES.

HOW GREEN
IS MY CITY?



DEAR MEMBERS,

One of the great things about being the Editor of our club magazine is getting to know many

talented members who we otherwise may not come in contact with. Be it bringing out their writing talent or featuring achievers who have inspiring tales to tell, this magazine is a window into the best of GNC. This July issue features a young achiever, Nishant, who's taken the entrepreneurial bull by the horns and set out on a journey to please your palate via Brownie Heaven. Also read about the phenomenal achievement of the GNC Cricket Team as they beat the big names to lift the very prestigious Prince of Arcot Trophy.

Thanvi Srikant contributes her regular column with yet another thought provoking article – Winds of Change. The Foodie Diaries reviews a whole bunch of new and not so new (but still worth a visit) restaurants and makes his recommendations. All this and lots more in this very special July issue.

Updates from the Library: It was an eventful month with GNC hosting its first ever book sale. The sale of old books (and excess stock) was a resounding success and resulted in 200 of the 210 books on sale being lapped up by members in a span of less than three hours. We are adding, on average, about 20-30 new books every month at the Library and covering wider topics and genres to reflect members reading interest. Members feedback on the same has been very positive. The work on the mezzanine level in the Library is complete and will now be a

dedicated space for Children's books. Over the next few months, a large collection of books for children of various age groups will be sourced and we will ensure that the Library plays its part in encouraging the reading habit.

The new GNC Website development work is complete and is pending integration of the payment gateway. You will, very shortly, be able to log in, view and pay your club bills via the website.

Thank you, once again, to all the sub committee members and Edge Design House for all the hard work in bringing out this issue. To members: should you wish to contribute articles for future issues, be sure to send in your articles to the club office at gandhinagarclub@gmail.com.

Best Regards,
 KP Balakumar - (B103)
 Member in Charge: Magazine, Website, Library and PR

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Dear Members,

Thanks to the endearing efforts of the Magazine Committee Chairman, the Committee gets to connect with members to detail them of the progress in various fronts. Content, layout and presentation of GC Connect has invited wide ranging appreciation. This issue features latest photographs of the facilities. Since being installed in late Sep/Oct2014, the committee has focused on rebuilding of facilities and strengthening administration. We are happy to find noticeable improvements. Still some more distance to go. We are encouraged by the positive feedback and happier mindset of members to complete our mission. Movies screened during the past one month has had overwhelming response, Crowds have been upwards of 300 for some movies and the dinner count had gone up to 160 in one of the movie night while in the others around 125. Food served at movie nights, parties and the restaurant have come in for appreciation. There have been a few shortcomings on account of delayed service and the same is being addressed.

Our plans to redo the Lobby & deck area, has gained momentum. Leading architects have visited the club, inspected the area, taken note of our wish list and have submitted draft proposal with entry level drawings. All of them look exciting. Shortly we propose to invite members for an informal get together to share the drawings and take inputs for final touches to the design.



Consequently, estimates will be taken from reputed companies for execution of the job and the final estimate will be placed before the General Body for approval. Likewise, Bye law committee have completed the exercise of copulating the bye laws factoring the various amendments carried out to the original and after suggesting few modifications to some of the existing bye laws taking into account its relevance in the current scenario. The draft has been circulated amongst committee members for their inputs. It's proposed to be taken up in the ensuing committee meeting for adoption and would be tabled before the General Body for its approval.

On account of the vacancy that has arisen due to resignation of the Member in Charge of Maintenance, Guest House & Conference halls, electing a new member would also be in the agenda in the forthcoming EGM proposed to be held during the end of this month or in the first week of August 2015. Date will be announced as soon as complete details to all the issued cited are available in full.

We are happy to inform of the completion of a MINI CONFERENCE/ MEETING HALL in the ground floor of our Guest House with independent entrance from the Lawn area. Will be ready for usage, no sooner the lawn toilet renovation is completed and furniture put in place. The mini hall is air-conditioned and would be ideal for groups of around 10 to max of 15 persons.

The prestigious annual 10000\$ ITF tennis tournament for Men will be held this year too at our club between 12th September to 19th September and its entire cost of around 12.5 lacs is being sponsored by Mr Karthi Chidambaram Rs 9 lacs and our Member Mr Kannan Adityan Rs 3 lacs. Our special thanks to Mr Karti and Mr Kannan for the fine gesture.

We hope to usher in systems to monitor the upkeep & maintenance of the club and facilitate easy entry and usage by members. We look forward to your support, encouragement, suggestions and constructive criticisms for improved service.



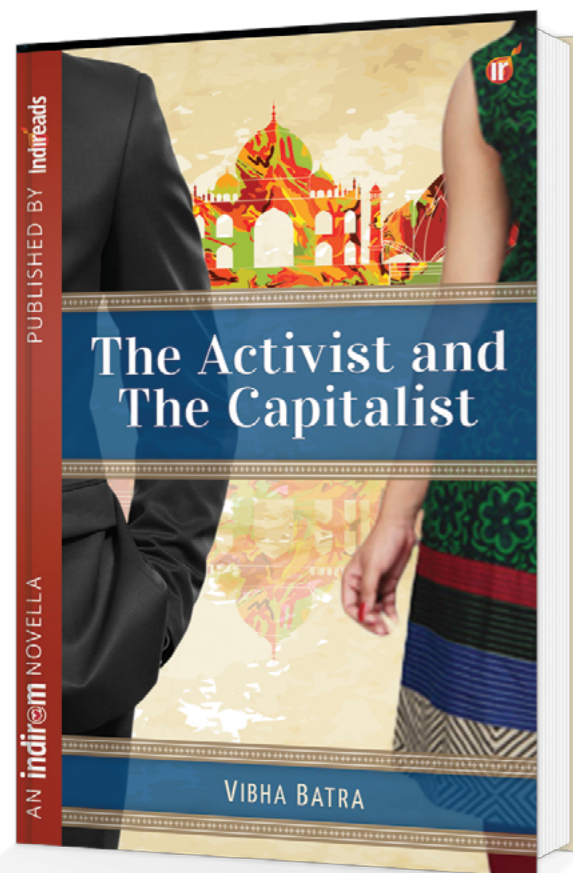
Some Of The Initiatives Taken During The Past 2 Months

- T Shirts and Caps with GNC name & Logo are being sold (subject to availability)
- Professional security guards contracted to monitor staff movement & attendance, material movement
- Guest house rooms, lobby areas fully renovated and furnishings replaced
- Composite Waste management system introduced in the kitchen
- Staff Toilets are under renovation
- Professional security guards contracted to monitor staff movement & attendance, material movement
- Guest house rooms, lobby areas fully renovated and furnishings replaced
- Composite Waste management system introduced in the kitchen
- New Uniforms provided to all the Service Staff
- Sale of old library books to members at concessional costs
- Computerisation of BAR Sales & Party bookings

Thanks
Ashok Sarrangan – Secretary (AI29)

Meet The Author

Vibha Batra (S356)



Author Bio:

Vibha Batra is an advertising consultant, author, poet, lyricist, and columnist. Her published books include: Sweet Sixteen (Yeah, Right!), Seventeen and Done (You Bet!), Eighteen and Wiser (Not Quite!) a Young Adult trilogy published by Penguin, Ishaavaasya Upanishad, a translation of her grandfather, Shri Vishnu Kant Shastri's book published by Rupa Publications, a poetry collection titled Tongue-in-cheek and a collection of short stories titled A Twist of Lime. She has also contributed short stories and poems to several national and international anthologies and written for various magazines – The Week, Dignity Dialogue, JFW, to name a few. She also wrote the Hindi lyrics for Harris Jayaraj's Vijay starrer Thuppaki.

Synopsis:

On a magical moonlit night, Jai and Anusha meet and fall in love. When they meet again however, they discover that Jai is the crass capitalist developing Rasa Vihar, the heritage building that Anusha and her NGO are fighting to protect. Inevitably they clash, with neither willing to concede to the other. The problem is that although publicly they are enemies, in private, they are wildly attracted to each other. – but when secrets and betrayals enter the equation – things really begin to get out of control.

Will the Activist and the Capitalist ever be able to find common ground?

Link to Buy:

Readers can buy the book on Amazon.com here : <http://www.amazon.com/Activist-Capitalist-Unlikely-Love-Story-ebook/dp/B00WJ12AJC>



WINDS OF CHANGE

Thanvi Srikant (S563)

How often have you faced a sudden change that has left a great impact on you? Is this 'change' restricted to environments, a way of thinking, or maybe both?

Here's my opinion on the various phases of adapting to the winds of change.

Phase 1:

When you start adjusting to a life away from all the attachments and the principles you lived by, till that point of time. [Difficulty level: 4/5; Symptoms: Impromptu emotional outbursts, Homesickness]

Phase 2:

Learning to adapt and having a new outlook on life. You may have slowly started liking this change. [Difficulty level: 2/5; Symptoms: Being friendly to acquaintances, finding happiness in introspection]

Phase 3:

Things begin to get complicated when you like it too much. So much that you wonder why your life wasn't this way all along. So why not shift your reality? [Difficulty level: 0/5; Symptoms: Unlimited Freedom, Perpetual Happiness, Bliss]

Phase 4:

Boundaries come to light. You may be disappointed on catching a glimpse of the horizon. [Difficulty level: 2/5; Symptoms: Rebellion, stress, Bucket-list-wish-fulfilment mode]

Phase 5:

Separation: Accepting the Next Change [Difficulty level: 5/5; Symptoms: Tears, tears and more tears. Cinematic flashback sequences of happy times]

The characteristic of nature is to flow. To keep moving, shifting and evolving. And so should we.

It's time we accepted that change is the only constant.

Unlike the movies where 'quality' time is spent on disclaimers that scream the words 'all characters are purely fictitious', this article of mine is completely based on my own experiences during the course of the last two months.

I witnessed a change so surreal, that I began to question where I was.

Sometimes, it takes a once-in-a-lifetime experience to make you realise that you might have probably been living in a bubble, or come to know that there are other ways to live than what you may have known all along. I underestimated the power of this realisation. It was only when I returned to my 'old way of life', that the gravity of the situation actually made me feel like an alien landing on earth.

Lesson learnt: Nothing lasts forever. The only way onward is forward.

So what happens when it's time to face the next big change?

It's the same cycle all over again. Letting go is never easy and it might take some time to accept it. But if you're an optimist and an opportunist, you will understand that everything probably happens for the best.

All of us are weary travellers in the journey of life, carrying backpacks filled with responsibilities, worries and regrets. The kind-hearted acquaintances we meet on the way are the ones who exchange the heavy load with some happiness, humour and a small dose of craziness, which helps you move on.

Of course not all of the happiness can be received at once, but in instalments, as and when something new in your life unfolds. So cherish the memories, accept the change and adapt. If you're lucky, you might get the chance to relive some of the experiences again during your journey, and meet some familiar faces.

The best thing about 'change' is its unpredictability. There's nothing that can prepare you for what's going to come, but that's what makes it all the more exciting.

Life is filled with surprises. For all you know, you might actually enjoy it. Here's hoping you do!

RENOVATED FACILITIES AT GNC

Conference Halls, Guest Rooms, Mini Conference Hall (Guest House), Ladies & Gents Restrooms





THE JOURNEY FROM DAVID TO GOLIATH

Varun Anand (V343)

T20, cricket's youngest and arguably most exciting format celebrated its tenth anniversary on the international circuit recently. The club cricket scene in Chennai however embraced the shorter format(s) much aforesaid during its inception in the early 90's. While the GNC has been renowned for the quality of its tennis teams over the years, cricket has never really been the club's strong suit. Although teams have been fielded intermittently from the mid 90's, GNC have never really been fancied as title contenders and the club's best performance hitherto this season was a lone final appearance back in 1998. This season however, the club was one of the standout performers finishing runners up in the prestigious Singaram pillai trophy and recently going a step further by winning the coveted Prince of Arcot trophy.

Such a turnaround seemed herculean a year ago when the club lost a few of its key players and there were thoughts about whether it was worth fielding a team for the season.

"I can still recall the day when Sanjeev and Rohit called me and convinced me that there are enough players and that we should form a team. Well, that is the start of such a remarkable turnaround", says Murukesh, the captain of the side. "First we made a list of the players who could possibly play and in a few days managed to put together a pool of about 15 players".

After a few practice sessions, the team entered the first two tournaments of the year-MYIND trophy and P.R Shankar memorial trophy respectively- with the aim of merely holding their own and providing a fight to the top sides. After an early exit in the first tournament, the team rallied through to the semi-finals of the P.R Shankar memorial trophy and there were encouraging signs, particularly in the bowling and fielding departments and it was heartening to see the teamgel together as a cohesive unit.

Then came the Singaram trophy hosted by Madras Gymkhana Club,

the oldest and most prestigious tournament on the circuit. The return of Varun Anand to the team for this tournament provided the much needed impetus the batting needed. After a narrow loss to start the tournament, the team won the next four group matches on the bounce to qualify for the semi-finals. The common theme of these matches involved putting the opposition into bat and restricting them to a total



in the range of 130-140 in the allotted 20 overs and chasing it down relatively comfortably. The semi-final, against the much fancied T.Nagar Club- who had won the first two tournaments- was one of the more memorable matches of the season. Upon winning the toss and electing to bat, T.Nagar posted a commendable 170 on the board. A good start from the top order meant that GNC were still in the match requiring 80 odd runs from the last 9 overs. With the match delicately poised, Murukesh stepped up to the occasion scoring a brilliant unbeaten half century to clinch a last ball thriller. The finals, against MCC was a rain truncated 15 over affair. After being put into a bat, a combination of reckless batting and a damp pitch meant that the GNC innings never really got going and a score of 95 was posted. MCC in reply got away to a blazing start racing to 30 off the first 3 overs. Although the bowlers pegged things back with wickets in the latter half of the innings, 95 eventually proved a few runs too less and MCC scrambled to victory with an over to spare. Sanjeev with 15 wickets in the tournament was named the "Bowler of the series" and Varun who finished with 300 odd runs was named the "Player of the series". The most important takeaway from the tournament however was the fact that it gave the team the belief that they could challenge the top teams and go all the way.

The final tournament of the year was the Prince of Arcot trophy hosted by his highness Nawab Mohammad Abdul Ali. With sixteen teams participating in the tournament, the entry for this tournament was not restricted exclusively to the clubs but also involved corporates taking part making it very competitive. The team for this tournament was bolstered by the inclusion of former first division stalwarts N.Raghavendran and G. Shyam Sundar and the return of ex junior state cricketer V.Nishant. A couple of convincing victories to begin the tournament- thanks mainly to the all-round efforts Raghavendran-



saw the team qualify for the quarterfinals to face a strong MCC side. This match- full of twists and turns- proved to be the match of the tournament. Having been asked to field, GNC's bowlers were disciplined and kept a check on the scoring in the first half of the innings. MCC's middle order however recovered in the second half to post a competitive 150 on the board. GNC in reply got off to a solid start before a flurry of wickets in the middle overs swung the match towards MCC's favour. The last four overs of the match was marked by a nerveless rescue act from the GNC lower order who managed to secure a tie from the jaws of defeat which resulted in the tournament's first super over. GNC, batting first in the super over scored 14 thanks to a couple of lusty blows from veteran Shyam Sunder before Raghavendran held his nerve with the ball restricting MCC to 12 runs to give the team a nail-biting win. The semi-final against Australia High commission-a young side which comprised mainly of students from the Hindustan University-proved to be a breeze as a solid team effort ensured that GNC overhauled their target of 130 odd with 4 overs to spare, thereby putting the club in its the second final of the year. GNC faced Suguna Vilas Sabha in the finals, a team that



earlier upset us in the group stages. Having won the toss, captain Murukesh had no hesitation in resorting to his tried and tested formula of putting the opposition into bat. The bowlers responded admirably and were as usual miserly with ball and picked up wickets at regular intervals to restrict the opposition to 120 with Nishant and Susheel picking three wickets apiece. Although the total was undoubtedly below par, the pressure of a final meant that no target could be taken lightly. Nishant and Kumar (the team's guest player for the tournament) eased GNC's



nerve with a solid start and Kumar in particular impressed with a quick fire 40. Suguna Vilas Sabha then struck back with 4 quick wickets to tilt the match back in the balance. Varun however guided the team again with an unbeaten 40 to give the club its first tournament victory which capped off a memorable year for the team.

There are quite a few people who were responsible for the team's success this year. Firstly, we should thank Member In-charge-Cricket Mr. Mahesh for his keen interest and constant support ensuring all our necessities were taken care of. It wouldn't have been possible without him. The entire committee for their constant encouragement and also taking the effort to be present at the ground during our key matches. Our thanks to teammate Ashwin Santhanam for consenting to sponsor our whites for this season. Shuttle marker Anbu for being at the ground for every match and helping us with the kit and refreshments. Finally, our captain Murukesh, without whom this journey wouldn't have even started. He was responsible for getting



everyone together, liaising between the tournament organizers and the club and ensuring we fielded the best XI for all the matches. Although he claims he's just the WhatsApp group admin he is definitely more than that.

This has definitely been the best year for the GNC cricket team and we are looking to raise the bar higher in the coming seasons. There are discussions taking place to provide access to practice facilities all year round for the cricket

team and the committee has also doubled the budget allocated for cricket in the coming year. With such developments taking place in the club for the first time we urge other members-especially budding youngsters- to get in touch with us to represent the club next year.

TEAM NAMES

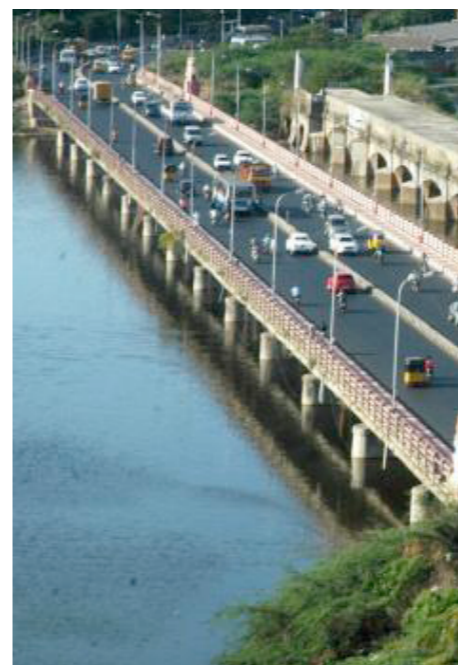
M.Murukesh, Varun Anand, V.Nishanth, G.Shyamsunder, N Raghavendran, Subhash Chandran, Sanjeev Mohan, B.Shivakumar, Rohit Balaji, P.Niranjan, R.Susheel, B.L.Vignesh, N.Rajagopal, Riaz, Sheriff, Umasangar, Arjun Suresh, T.K.Rangarajan, Mahesh Pandi, Aayush Pandi, N.Harish, V.Avinash, Ashwin Santhanam,

TOP PERFORMERS-BATTING		
Name	Runs	Innings
Varun Anand	473	11
Subash Chandran	355	18
M.Murukesh	349	18

TOP PERFORMERS-BOWLING		
Name	Wickets	Matches
Sanjeev Mohan	44	20
B.Shivakumar	22	20
R.Rajagopal	16	14

THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS of My GandhiNagar

Babu Jacob (J126)



With the NaMo wave sweeping across India that is Bharat, if a few among the readers thought that this article is about Gandhinagar, the capital of Namoland, a.k.a Gujarat, they are excused. I am referring to Gandhinagar, in Namma Chennai. Yes, about an elite neighborhood in Adyar. Well, I have the privilege to be a proud resident of this prestigious neighborhood for the past quarter century. Its boundaries are as famous as itself: The once majestic (now a shadow of what it used to be) Adyar river on the north, the arterial Sardar Patel Road on the south, the world famous 300 plus acre verdant Theosophical Society, which is truly a veritable urban forest, on the east (with the Bay of Bengal's gentle waves constantly

caressing the shores just beyond it), and the infamous Buckingham Canal on the west (with the Adyar Cancer Institute acting as a buffer). Gandhinagar, named after the father of the nation, is perhaps one of the first well planned posh neighborhoods in Chennai, formed in the early fifties.

It was promoted by a handful of visionaries with a passion, as a co-operative Housing society, a few years after India became a free nation. The Gujarat connection is very much in evidence for GANDHI nagar. Yes, Sardar Vallabhai Patel (after whom the Sardar Patel Road is named) and Gandhi are from Gujarat and Gujarat's capital city bears the same name as our dear Gandhinagar.

When we think of Gandhinagar, what comes to our minds first and foremost is that it is an educational hub with a dozen or so educational institutions, both schools and colleges, that dot the northern part of this up-market, primarily residential elite colony. Older residents have fond, nostalgic memories of their good old times in this pristine, once verdant lush green layout with wide roads, a large cricket ground and other open grounds as lungs, and broad roads with sparse traffic, where deer sightings were quite common. Yes deer, I mean it. In fact,

horns of automobiles of varying sizes and makes, it is a pain to even cross the road to reach my bank just across the road! Senior citizens like me are under tremendous mental and physical strain to survive in this hostile environment. What with petrol and diesel fumes wafting in the air we breathe, it is a miracle that these carcinogenic pollutants have not made us victims of cancer in this neighborhood, known for the Adyar Cancer Institute founded by the legendary Dr. V. Shantha who has been doing yeomen service to thousands of poor cancer patients from all the

Bhagavan beats down on us mercilessly. In my terrace garden, I have provided a large cement container, which is filled with water all the time for pigeons, koels, sparrows, crows and other birds and even squirrels to quench their thirst. I watch them at close quarters when they land on the edges of the container, especially just before dusk, as they have a fill before taking off to their favorite roosting spots on trees nearby. I, sometimes, also observe several bats invading a nearby fruit tree during season, hanging upside down from that tree and making squeaking sounds

the roads in their walking attire. Aavin milk delivery men collect their milk sachets from the booths and cycle to apartment complexes and houses to deliver to residents. As the day slowly breaks, and the morning sun emerges majestically and in full reddish glory on the eastern firmament, it is the turn of the 'newspaper boys' to carry bundles of various newspapers in English and vernacular to be delivered in residences. While a few of them are seen on two wheelers, most pedal their way to deliver the hot news for the day to residents. For these so called 'newspaper boys', as also the milk delivery men, it is a part time job. Shanmugham, my news paper 'boy', who is the father of two grown up sons, for example, delivers bread, biscuits, eggs etc in the evenings. His sons assist him in the mornings to deliver newspapers (one of them is an MBA student!).

to the streets to eke out a living, though mundane and therefore taken for granted by most of us, have always been a never ending source of curiosity and intrigue for me. I watch them with curiosity and even admiration as they struggle to be bread winners for their families, often assisted by their wives who work as domestic help to supplement the husband's income. However, on the flip side, there are several of them who patronize the Tasmac outlets and fritter away the day's earnings to pay homage and propitiate Bachus, the Roman God of spirit!

More such sights and sounds are to follow. A man is seen (and heard!) shouting at a high pitch "old newspapers". He has a hand held weighing balance and pauses in front of an Apartment complex, hoping to be called inside by a resident whose storage space for old newspapers and magazines is filled up to the brim. Another man is heard screaming repeatedly "Do you have knives to be sharpened?". He carries his tool on a wheel on his shoulder. The ubiquitous tea waala on a bicycle is dispensing a cup of the steaming beverage in a plastic cup to the security man outside a flat complex. The cost of a small cup of about 100 ml is Rs 5, I am told. My watchman is not impressed with the 'saada' tea. He is waiting for his regular guy, who brings him hot ginger coffee (chukku kaappi).

It is 7.15 am and it is time for the dozens of cars to take over the wide Gandhinagar avenues. A traffic cop is seen putting up a "no entry" board and a barricade at the entrance to my road. He has a grave face and he stands guard with vigil, to stop anyone trying to violate the "NO ENTRY" rule. The same cop turns a blind eye to flagrant violations of traffic rules by rich parents of the school opposite my house!

Gandhinagar is no longer a haven of tranquility. Slowly but steadily, commercial establishments are springing up at the once deserted

broad roads of this much sought after prestigious colony with a glorious past to boast. Restaurants are opened to cater to the ever growing demand from the burgeoning populace. Munveedu, opened last year, while Sangeetha has been doing roaring business for the last several years. On the First Main Road, where "Hotel Traffic Jam"(what an imaginative name!) once stood, you find a huge commercial complex. Grand Sweets too have an eatery here, apart from Sri Krishna sweets, although the forte of both is sweets and savories. In the niche segment are Azzuri Bay and Crimson Chakra, both peacefully co-existing in the same building near the Gandhinagar Club. The latest entrant is a year old little restaurant with a cute name "KOZHI IDLI"! All the very best to you, Kozhi Idli! Craveyard Cafe is a new restaurant craving for your attention and patronage. Vanga Vanga ("come, come") is not a restaurant, but a well established provision and vegetable/fruit shop, a household name among the middle class, with a loyal clientele for decades. It literally beckons patrons with its suggestive and interesting name.

A welcome recent development is that the Gandhinagar Cricket Club ground is thrown open to the residents for walking. Kudos to the office bearers for this laudable step in the right direction. I am sure residents will avail this wonderful opportunity and become regular walkers in this main lung space of the area. The old saying that there are no free lunches has been disproved. Yes, here you can walk with a pass which is free! As we all know, walking is the best aerobic exercise and what better place to walk than a green, open field in your own neighborhood with plenty of breeze and like-minded people for company with no vehicles posing a threat to your lives. Keep walking! Happy walking folks!

Babu Jacob (J126)

Feedback:bjacob20@rediffmail.com
9840089864



residents used to take them for granted as they were regular guests in the colony..I have myself been witness to herds of deer, especially during dusk and early nights, more so on the then thickly shrubbed areas near the Adyar River abutting Crescent Park Road, close to St Patrick's school. Their bewildered looks when an occasional car passed by, their gleaming eyes shining like diamonds when the bright car headlights fall on them, are still vivid in my memory. Those were the days when my Gandhinagar was an abode of peace and tranquility, never marred by honking of cars and other vehicles, which, sadly, is the order of the day, today.

What a pleasurable experience it was, to have a morning or evening walk on the several avenues of this wonderful colony! These days, with the traffic and the attendant cacophony of blaring

foursouthern states, during the last several decades. In these days and times when people have very little time to stand and stare, it is very interesting to watch the flora and fauna and more importantly, the varied avatars of Homo sapiens (our fellow human beings!). Gandhinagar still has a few independent houses left, out of the hundreds originally built, although the vast majority of them have inevitably given way to apartment complexes, as in the case of other parts of Chennai. Avenue trees and trees inside the compounds of a few independent old houses, are still standing majestically with their green canopies, providing a place for birds and squirrels to rest and nest and humans to have a reprieve from the scorching Chennai Sun! Sea breeze gently wafting from the Bay of Bengal provides the much needed, albeit partial, respite when Soorya

of perhaps pleasure or amour! At dusk, I watch from my terrace, squadrons of winged mammals: flying foxes or bats as we all refer to them, flying westwards from their tree abodes inside the Theosophical Society (TS). I once counted more than 500 of them, flying at perhaps 100 feet above ground level, gently flapping their wings, on their nocturnal journey in search of their favorite fruits found in certain fruit bearing trees. I am told that after satiating their hunger pangs, they all fly back during early morning to their permanent homes inside the TS.

It is a pleasurable experience to watch and hear a plethora of several very mundane sights and sounds, ordinarily taken for granted by most of us, when I go for my regular morning and evening walks. During mornings, even before the day breaks, I see health freaks, both men and women, who have already hit

No Time Please!

R.V.Rajan (R.143)

Lack of time is an excuse which many people who have plenty of time give; for not doing a job or not doing the mandatory exercises or even pursuing a hobby. It is just a mindset problem. I have found that the busiest people I know always find time to do what they want!

My friend Sam Balsara, the legendary adman, Chairman of the Madison Group, is one such person. Apart from his personal involvement in the thirty odd companies he has a stake in; he is also very active in many industry bodies.

His day starts at 9.00 am when he leaves for his office and ends only when he returns home after 10 or 11 pm invariably after attending some function or the other. Though an extremely busy man, he always finds time to do a great job of whatever responsibility he takes on. He is also very prompt in responding to any communication sent to him by anyone through email, SMS or even a simple telephone call. It may be just a two word

'Yes Rajan', 'No Rajan' or a line giving his response to a problem or a request posed to him. When a journalist once asked him "You are always so busy. How do you find time for everything? Don't you ever relax?" He said, "Since I am thoroughly enjoying whatever I am doing, I relax on the job" He is really amazing!

Feedback welcome on 9840392082
or rvrajan42@gmail.com

**This article was carried in the May issue of GNC Connect but due to a publishing error, article was incorrectly reproduced.*

After analyzing the success stories of many successful and accomplished people, I have come to the conclusion that the secret lies in 'Time Management' and prioritizing the jobs at hand.

If you plan your activities for the day, for the week or even for a month ahead, you can by and large achieve whatever you set out to do – barring when your routine is affected by totally unexpected events happening in the family or when your health is badly affected.

I am a great believer in preparing check lists for every activity I am involved in, so much so, in some circles I am even known as 'Check list Rajan'.

I have found from experience that when you list down everything in writing, instead of depending on your memory (which in any case is poor in my case) and meticulously follow up on the list you can achieve a lot. You will never give lack of time or poor memory as an excuse for not doing a job. It is another matter, if you prepare the check list but forget to review it regularly.

The sense of achievement you get when you are able to do a job well even when you have time constraints is something which you have to experience to realize it. "Great, I have done the job, what next?" should be the attitude in life. Never ever say "No time Yaar!" when you can actually find the time to do whatever you want to do, if you will it.



FUDGY CHOCOLATE CUPCAKES WITH FLAVOURED DARK CHOCOLATE GANACHE

Rashmee Gopalan (R296)

Makes : 12 cupcakes

Ingredients

All purpose flour: 100 g
Unsweetened Cocoa powder: 30g
Baking powder: 1 tsp
Baking soda: ½ tsp
Fresh Coffee decoction: 2 tbsp
Eggs: 2
Butter(softened): 125 g
Dark brown sugar : 125g
Dark Chocolate chips: 1/2cup

Method

- Preheat oven to 180 C
- Beat the sugar and butter till fluffy
- Add in 1 egg at a time and beat well
- Sift dry ingredients into the above and mix well .Do not over beat
- Add in the decoction and chocochips and mix
- Pour in disposable cupcake liners and bake until the top feels light and springy to touch. This will take between 15-20 minutes.
- Set aside until completely cool

FOR THE GANACHE

Ingredients

Fresh cream : 1 tetrapack (180ml)
Dark chocolate : 375 g
Orange juice: 2 tsp
Orange rind : 1 tsp
Peppermint extract : 1 tsp
Orange /mint for garnish

Method

- Chop chocolate into small pieces and microwave in bursts of 30 seconds till melted
- Warm cream gently over flame and pour into the chocolate mixture.
- Stir till smooth.
- Split the above mixture into two bowls. To one portion, add peppermint extract and pipe onto cupcakes. To the other portion add orange rind and orange juice before topping cupcakes. Decorate with segments of orange and mint.
- Make the ganache a day ahead of time, cling wrap and leave at room temperature if piping consistency is desired. Alternately ,the ganache can also be slathered on the cupcakes.



Photo Credit: Shyam Vasudevan



Photo Credit: Shyam Vasudevan



A TASTE OF HEAVEN!

Thanvi Srikant (S563)

They say the best way to please somebody is to satisfy their hunger with some delicious food.

There's nothing better than a hot brownie to make you smile even if you've had a really long day. But these scrumptious desserts don't just have to be simple and plain. Have you ever wanted to try a brownie that tastes like filter coffee? Or Chilli perhaps?

You may be a fan of the classic and old fashioned, but when food and creativity come together you've got to accept that the combinations can't be anything

short of mouth-watering. Meet Nishant Vijaykumar (N227), whose 'Brownie Heaven' is the city's latest dessert hub. It's just a month old, but has already become the talk of the town. Read on as he opens up to Club Connect about his journey so far, his venture into entrepreneurship and his future plans.

CC(Club Connect): Having represented the State Cricket Team at the age of 17, when did you decide to switch career options?

NV(Nishant Vijaykumar): I'm a true foodie. Even while travelling for cricket tournaments, I would always be on the lookout for authentic food joints in and around my place of stay. Cricket was my passion, but my dream

was to become an entrepreneur, and I decided to choose the hospitality industry as a path to reach my goal. Being a sportsman, I wanted to choose a profession that would keep me on my toes 24/7. After doing my bachelors in Hotel Management, I joined the ITC Hotels Group in Gurgaon as a Kitchen Management Trainee and recently graduated as a Jr. Sous Chef. That was when I decided to start my first business venture in Chennai.

CC: Your new brownie combinations at 'Brownie Heaven' have become an instant success with Chennai's foodies. With the expertise of a sous chef, how did you choose to make 'brownies' in particular?

NV: Brownies are desserts that have been a people's favourite any day of the week. I wanted to make a classic dish, but experiment by incorporating new flavours. At Brownie Heaven we serve Peppermint, Filter Coffee, Roasted Nuts, Rum, Chili, Orange Peel, White Chocolate, White Chocolate with Orange and even Sugar- Free Brownies!

CC: Do you plan on starting any other business ventures soon?

NV: Brownie Heaven is just my first venture. In the near future, I'm planning on setting up Brownie Heaven kiosks at Besant Nagar, Anna Nagar and make these brownies accessible all across the city. My long term goal is to establish an umbrella brand, under which I will launch smaller brands. In a few months I have plans of launching an Idli Brand and a Fish and Chips Brand as well. Talking about idli, it's something Chennai-ites enjoy eating any time of the day. Its versatility can be used creatively as well. I would like to introduce 15 types of idli, with different flavours. A chocolate idly for example, would have the essence of chocolate infused with the flour itself, and there would also be texture with small pieces of chocolate embedded in it.

CC: Talk about creativity! That's really interesting to hear. What is your outlook on fine dining in Chennai?
NV: I want to redefine the dining space in our city. People should understand that even simple, good food can be made delicious, creative and visually appealing. My dream is to start a restaurant where I would serve 'One Table a Night', serving an exquisite personalised meal of 6-7 courses based on my customers' tastes.

CC: That sounds fantastic. Have you thought of catering food to a large group? If so, what do you think are the most important factors you should take care of?
NV: Numbers aren't an issue at all, and I'm open to taking bulk orders for brownies as well. Quality is the most important factor. Irrespective of the number of brownies I make, I ensure that each one of them tastes equally good. The other factor is value for money. High prices need not necessarily be an indication of the standard of your product. My recipes are unique and I want to show people that even tasty food can be made economical.

CC: Being an entrepreneur is no easy task. How have you been able to keep your dreams alive?

NV: As a chef and an entrepreneur too, I have been multitasking and managing a lot of things the past few months. I work 18 hours a day and lose a lot of sleep, but I enjoy every bit of it. Following your passion takes a lot of effort, but is very satisfying and exciting. I've been blessed to have the constant support of my friends and family.

MORE ABOUT NISHANT

Favourite Chefs:
Grant Achatz ('The Aviary', Chicago), Michel Bras

Favourite Brownies:
Roasted Nut Brownie, Rum

Motto: Do what you believe in and be confident; never be forced to do anything out of fear

His secret to good cooking:
passion and creativity

Nishant can be reached at exec.chef.nishant@gmail.com and on the Facebook page www.facebook.com/brownieheavenbynishant

PARAGLIDING IN PUNE

Malavika Kamath (V 322)



One hot week in May my family and I decided to escape Chennai's heat for the relatively cooler city of Pune, though the heat was a few degrees less. It was here in the 'Queen of the Deccan' I decided to test my courage and try paragliding. Paragliding is often confused with parasailing. Though both are quite similar they do have their differences. In parasailing you have an option of flying over land or water. Also you are tied to a boat (over water) or a jeep (over land).

Paragliding is a bit scarier since there is only a parachute and you are not tethered to anything stable. In Pune we went paragliding from a small hill near a village called Kamshet, around 50 kms from the city.

We decided to go on a hot Sunday afternoon/evening. We set out at 2 in the afternoon for the hill. We reached about an hour later. In fact the hill is a little outside Pune and closer to the hill station of Lonavala. It was surrounded by fields of brown scattered with green trees.

The actual take off for paragliding happens on a flat plain which is located about halfway across the hill. So we had to climb the hill. The path leading up was very narrow and filled with small rocks. But the climb was relatively easy. We ran up as fast as we could, sweating profusely in the sweltering

afternoon sun. And we were rewarded with a beautiful vista. The view from the height was all brown fields and endless blue skies.

There was a lot of exploring to be done and since the winds were too strong to fly, me and my friends ran off to explore and to find some shade. We found a huge rock which offered some shade. We sat on the side, leaning against the rock. Finally after half an hour we saw people taking off.

Soon the sky was dotted with colourful parachutes. Some parachutes went so high it looked like they were touching the clouds! Learning to paraglide takes up to ten days. But for those who want to fly without putting in the effort there is something called tandem paragliding. This involves a parachute with a double harness which allows a trained pilot and another person to fly together.

Obviously I don't know how to paraglide so I had to go on a tandem. The winds that day were quite strong and this was because the paragliding season was almost over. According to my mother's friend the best time to go paragliding is in summer before the monsoon and later in October after the monsoon.

I ate and watched the various parachutes take off and land. I remember watching

this one particular parachute trying to land more than five times and failing miserably each and every time. This was because of the strong winds. We were asked to wait because of this reason. After some more waiting it was finally my turn!

I was strapped to the parachute and given a safety helmet. I was a bit scared I was going to barf because I had eaten quite a bit. But taking off was actually very smooth. In fact the whole ride was smooth. It was really nice being up in the open sky like that. The winds blew past my face and my legs were dangling some 1km from the ground. There is also something called acrobatics in the air where the pilot twists and turns the parachute just for that thrill. But it wasn't all that scary at all. When I watched the parachutes doing acrobatics from the ground it looked quite scary as they twisted and turned pretty sharply in the winds. However in reality it just felt like a gentle turn in the air. The view from the parachute was also amazing! I could see more hills surrounding the fields and the sun was a big, blazing ball in the sky. The ride was supposed to be ten minutes but it felt much shorter. Thankfully we landed on the first go! Overall it was an amazing and surreal experience and I am glad I decided to try it.

THE FOODIE DIARIES

KP Balakumar (B103)

THE BREW ROOM



Any meet up with friends means a visit to one of the numerous café's dotting the city. One such café that is slowly becoming a regular for such meet ups is the Brew Room. Serving coffee sourced from around the world and prepared in different ways, BR has two outlets in the City. While the larger and more visually attractive of the two is attached to the Savera Hotel in RK Salai, my latest visit is to the smaller, cosier one at Besant Nagar. The menu has a fair variety of, as one would expect, coffee and a smattering of café/bistro style food options. We get mozzarella sticks, a tofu and pesto sandwich and a cajun spicy chicken sandwich to go with our order of Irish cream cold coffee (nope, no Baileys here, though one always hopes!), mocha frappé, a regular frappé and a chocolate milkshake. Everything is tasty and hits the spot (the chocolate milkshake was stellar – think liquid Nutella, you know what I'm getting at!). The highlight of the evening, besides the coffee and food, was a delightful live English music performance by a singer, Harini. I don't quite know if this is a regular feature at the Brew Room but if it is, be sure to get yourself a seat, makes every Rupee spent at BR even more worth it.

Average meal for two: Rs 800-1000

PUPIL



If you've lived in Chennai any time since early 2000 and burgers are your thing, it's quite unlikely that you've never heard of Pupil (or the many avatars it has had previously). Ridiculously tasty burgers and sandwiches that had folks I know drive all the way from Anna Nagar just for their fill of delicious burgers, sandwiches and chicken wings, Pupil (also known earlier as Bagio's and Verona's) is a legend in the City. No visit to Besant Nagar beach was ever complete without the customary visit to Pupil. They did go through some tough times a few years ago (and expectedly, quality dropped) but the owner, Satish, came through all those troubled times and has emerged stronger. What makes the Pupil burger a total stand out? For starters, the soft bun, the generously sized patties, the oozing mayonnaise and bbq sauce (be sure to ask them for extra, they always oblige) all ensuring a deliciously epic and messy burger.. just the way I love it! Besides the burgers (and there's plenty to choose from, BBQ Chicken Burger being my favorite), a standard order has been the Grilled chicken sandwich.. to my mind, no chicken sandwich in the City comes close to this one. If you're vegetarian, choose from any of the popular ones like the Veg Steak Burger (cottage cheese patty, drenched in pepper brown sauce) or the Supreme Cheese sandwich (with

a combination of cheddar and mozzarella cheese). If you're a monster, then go for the Ghost Burger – 4 patties, 4 slices of cheese, pickles, mustard sauce, mayonnaise, spicy bbq sauce and fried onions). Pupil may not have the brand image or ambiance or relative consistency of a McDonald's or even the hip Double Roti but for me, Pupil serves Chennai's best burgers and sandwiches. Recently renovated (about time, really) with the addition of an air conditioned dining section, if you haven't been to Pupil before, you don't know what you've been missing.

Average meal for two: Rs 500

DIPPING POT



A fascination to try every new restaurant that opens in the City isn't an urge that comes just to me but to a lot of my friends. And when we'd heard that there's this new place in town that served a wide variety of fondues (along with its regular menu), we were certainly not going to give it a miss. Aply named Dipping Pot, this little restaurant is situated on TTK Road, on the side nearer to the Music Academy. We got there early enough to be the first ones for lunch and ordered enough food for an army. Crumb fried mushroom, Buffalo wings, Chicken nuggets, Chicken Stroganoff and Spaghetti Aglio Olio for starters and mains. Everything other than the chicken nuggets, which tasted pretty much like it was from a ready to eat packet, was delicious. I loved the bbq sauce drenched on the buffalo wings, pretty addictive. The portion sizes were quite generous and we

were struggling to finish what we'd ordered...but that didn't mean that we could leave without trying their signature fondue! A chocolate fondue for dessert was our order and it didn't disappoint. The molten chocolate was accompanied by chunks of brownies, an assortment of fruits (strawberry, banana and kiwi) and chocolate wafers. Certainly made for a delicious end to our meal. There aren't too many restaurants in the City where one can indulge in a fondue and DP certainly is a welcome addition to the dining options in Chennai.

p.s. Parking could be an issue since the available space in front of the building would only suffice for a couple of cars, so you may have to park on an adjacent lane and walk back.

Average meal for two: Rs 1000

WAFFLES THRU THE DAY



Getting to try the food at WTTD was quite a task! Attempt number one was on the day we read about them (they were featured in the TOI) only to realize, after driving all the way, that they didn't open until a day later. Attempt number two was on a weekend night and we walked into a packed house! On enquiring and being told that service would take 30-45 minutes, we decide to come back another day. Lesser mortals would have probably taken cue from these signs from the Gods but our tummies are made of sterner stuff. Strategically deciding to go on a weekday, early evening to boot, we are greeted, on attempt number three, with an entire café all to ourselves. The menu at WTTD consists of waffles, pancakes

and crepes that are made, both, sweet and savory style. We order a Classic waffle (dusted with sugar and served with strawberries), a banana and strawberry Crepe and one savory waffle, the Mediterranean (waffle cooked with corn, spinach and olives). While we weren't wowed by any of what we ordered, the waffles are certainly decent and the portion sizes are generous. Our group's resident Cappuccino expert, Kapil Vishwanathan, rated the one at WTTD an 8/10 (with the one at Chamiers (Café at Anokhi) being the benchmark at 10/10). With a little tweaking, the food on offer at WTTD could be a lot better. Worth a visit.

Average meal for two: Rs 800

THE BEACH CLUB



Suresh Menon's latest venture (with Chef Anand) is The Beach Club, a fabulously located restaurant (right by the Neelankarai beach, facing the sea) serving up a primarily Continental/Mediterranean menu. Just about a month old, they are still adding/tweaking things on the menu to get things just right. Service is available both, outdoors and inside the house-converted-into-a-restaurant but if you're going for dinner, don't even think about sitting inside..head to the tables that give you a beautiful view of the beach and sea on that wonderful open-to-the-sky deck. Food on this one visit was good and I'm fairly certain, given Chef Anand's admirable track record, that, both, the variety on offer and the quality, will go several notches higher. Of what we tried that night, the taste of the steamed fish with a touch of orange, still lingers.

The stir fried prawns with garlic, chilli flakes and coriander was also very tasty. We tried the tres leches in a jar for dessert and came back quite pleased. Pricing, given the location and ambiance, was moderate. Menu options give both, vegetarians and non-vegetarians, plenty to choose from.

Average meal for two: Rs 1000

CUPCAKES AMORE



This little café / cupcake boutique has been on my list of favorites for some time now. I go there often to get my fill of their delicious egg sandwich and their beautifully decadent and fudgy brownie. While their café at Adyar is soon to become an outlet of the Old Madras Baking Company (so you know where to head if you're craving freshly baked bread), they're now present just off TTK Road, next to the Japanese restaurant, Momoyama. The cupcakes at CA are some of the finest in the City and the brownie truly is a stand out – second only to the ones available at Sandy's. Their food menu is limited to a range of sandwiches, some

CONTACT DETAILS

The Brew Room: 45AB, Subham Complex, 7th Avenue, Besant Nagar, Chennai – 90. Ph No: 044 2491 7557

Pupil: 1 & 2, TNHB Complex, 4th Main Road, Besant Nagar, Chennai – 90. Ph No: 98415 83500.

Dipping Pot: 51, TTK Road, Alwarpet, Chennai – 18. Ph No: 044 4215 4488

quiche, mini pizzas, hot dogs and occasional specials like the Khau Suey (only on Wednesday's) while the beverage options include a very good hot chocolate and cold coffee. With friendly service and wifi to help you stay connected, Cupcakes Amore is that quaint little café that you could keep coming back to.

Average meal for two: Rs 700

CRAVEYARD CAFÉ



With such a quirky name, I was really surprised that few have heard of this cosy little café in Gandhinagar. With little advertising, they've relied more on word of mouth publicity to get folks to come by. I must admit, though I stay just a few streets away, it's taken me a long time to finally make that visit to CC and I came back with mixed views. It's a house that's been converted into a Cafe with seating both, indoors and outside on the lawn. The interiors are colorful with an attempt to give it a kitschy look. We ordered a hot chocolate, a chocolate milkshake, chicken poppers and a margherita pizza.

Craveyard Cafe: 18, 2nd Canal Cross Road, Gandhi Nagar, Adyar, Chennai – 20. Ph No: 96291 77700

Cupcakes Amore: 16, 1st Cross Street, Sri Ram Nagar, Alwarpet, Chennai – 18. Ph No: 044 2436 0108

Waffles Thru The Day: 18, 5th Cross Street, Indra Nagar, Chennai – 20. Ph No: 98840 35655

The pizza, a thin crust (you have a choice of medium or large), was unexpectedly good! The chicken poppers and milkshake were decent while the hot chocolate was let down by being overly sweet. While we didn't try any desserts, there were quite a few on display.. didn't look very appealing though. The café also provides free wi-fi, so if you're one those of who loves to browse/get some work done while having a sip of coffee and a light snack, Craveyard Cafe is then worth a try.

Average meal for two: Rs 600

ALSO TRIED

DUNKIN DONUTS (PHOENIX MALL)

– More hype than taste. The doughnuts are decent but definitely not anything to rave about. Between Krispy Kreme and Dunkin Donuts, KK wins hands down. (And honestly, few doughnuts beat the ones at Adyar Bakery when they are eaten fresh (4 pm at Adyar is when their daily stock arrives, is what I was told on my last visit.. AB over KK and DD for me)

MCDONALD'S, ADYAR –

Disappointed with my only visit soon after they opened. Tasty fries couldn't rescue the meal that was destroyed by an insipid burger. The chocolate milkshake was pretty ordinary too. Unlikely to head back there. Save your money and head to either Pupil or Double Roti.

The Beach Club: 4/33, Beach Road, Kapaleeshwar Nagar, Neelankarai, Chennai – 41. Ph No: 90038 77195

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(Know of a restaurant that you think MUST feature in The Foodie Diaries? Send me a line at my email id)

All pictures in this article are courtesy the Facebook pages of the respective restaurants/internet

MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS



Saket Reddy won the Gold in the Double Scull and Silver in the Single Scull at the recently concluded 18th Sub Junior National Rowing Championships at Bangalore.



Zahra Nachle for Nepal - dance a bit, was an enjoyable workshop to give back to society. A Sunday afternoon well spent dancing bollywood. Rohini Mohan (R438), a well known Sangeeth choreographer put together three sessions of an hour each. The first batch was for age 35 and above for which she had choreographed a song from the popular Hindi movie "Tanu weds Manu Returns". Rohini's talents were showcased best as she choreographed the same song for the first batch as well as the last

batch for youngsters. Her choreography for both these sessions was completely different yet comfortable for either batch to pick up and enjoy as well.

The second session was one for couples for which she choreographed for "Dil Dhadakhe Do". This was also a very different type of choreography which involved some Jazz steps with a bollywood twist. Here, Rohini took everyone micro-step by micro- step making it convenient even for someone with two left feet

dance well and also have a jolly good time while doing it!

On the whole it was a very satisfying afternoon and everyone left with a sense of accomplishment of having learnt to dance to an entire song in just an hour and also to have contributed to the hour of need! and the talented Rohini was left with requests for more such workshops. All proceeds from the workshop were donated to the Nepal Earthquake Relief Fund through the Inner Wheel Club of Madras.

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