



# Percussion for the people

● Naaz Ghani

**T**he crowd stood mesmerised underneath the evening sky, as percussionist Murali Krishnan and his band played popular instrumental tunes for them outside the Central Metro Station on Wednesday. Large speakers were set up. Men, women and children alike clapped their hands in rhythm. Murali was surrounded by his drum set. Leaning into a mic at one corner of the ensemble, he said, "I want everyone to repeat after me." He sang out a few notes and the crowd repeated. "Now let's include it in the song," he said. After a quick nod to Varun Krishnan on the keyboard, he gave him a beat and began playing a peppy tune. The crowd joined in, repeating the set of notes he had taught them. The music picked up pace and Murali bobbed up and down over the drums as he got lost in the music.

With the Margazhi music season in full swing, the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has organised Metro Music Edit at multiple stations till January 1. Drums Murali, as he is popularly known, was one of the artistes to perform on December 18. His troop also included Sankrith on the bass guitar, Madurai B Sundar on the mridangam and Neyveli Radhakrishnan on the violin. The band enjoyed themselves as they silently

gave each other cues while playing in sync. A few children in the audience danced, encouraging a few of the adults to also sway with the music. A lively performance, Radhakrishnan energetically drew his bow across the strings of his violin, his eyes closed, listening to the rhythm and keyboard as he played his tunes impromptu.

Every performance by the band was met with thunderous applause from the audience. "It only encourages and motivates us more to perform like this," said Murali. Between 6 pm to 8 pm, the crowd eventually grew from a few 50 bystanders to over 200 commuters, walking in and out of the Metro station. A few people from the Central railway station had also stopped to watch the performance. As the band packed up, shouts of an encore resonated through the crowd. The band promised to return next Margazhi.

Neyveli Radhakrishnan played the violin ● P Jawahar

