

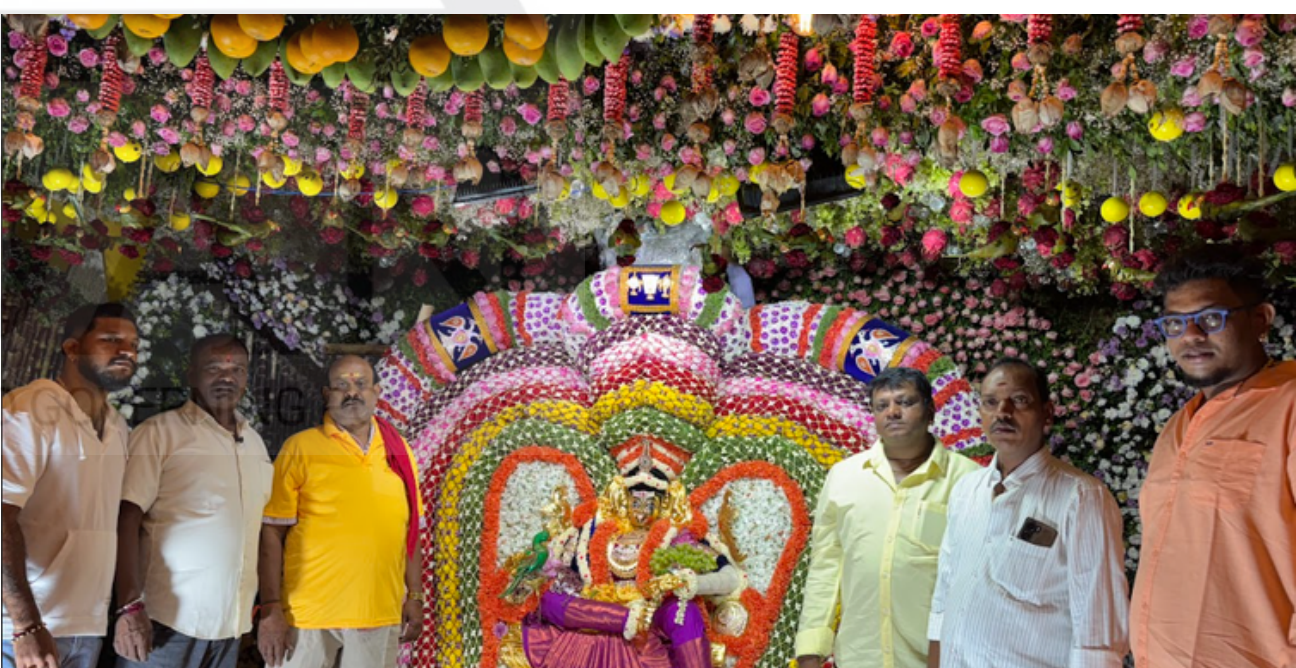
A Zero Waste Celebration – Annamma Devi Festival at KR Market



Every year, the bustling lanes of KR Market come alive with colors, devotion, and joy as the community gathers to celebrate the Annamma Devi Festival. The air fills with the fragrance of flowers, the sight of sugarcane and fruits, and the sounds of prayers and laughter. For 46 years, this tradition has bound the market family together.

But this year, the festival carried a new meaning. Along with devotion, it carried a message of responsibility — a message that culture and sustainability can walk hand in hand.

The idea began with a memory. Back in 2022, Vedan Trust had worked with KR Market to recover fruits and flowers from the festival, redirecting them to good use instead of waste. The effort had stayed in the mind of **Mr. Senthil, President of KR Market**. As the 2025 festival approached, he reached out to Vedan, determined to bring back that spirit of Zero Waste, this time on a much larger scale.



The request came at short notice, and there were very few volunteers available. But the community refused to give up. Vedan quickly arranged for labourers to take on the work of recovery and segregation. The costs were generously supported by **Mrs. Padmashree Balaram, SVP India Lead Partner**, ensuring the event could move forward without delay.

On the day of the festival, KR Market looked like a grand temple, decorated entirely with fruits, vegetables, and flowers. As the idol of Annamma Devi was taken out in procession, the Zero Waste team quietly began their work. Labourers, marshals, and Vedan members carefully removed the decorations, cutting wires, sorting fruits, and collecting every piece with care.



At first, there was confusion — fruits were getting mixed up, wires were tough to cut — but with guidance, the team quickly found their rhythm. Volunteers like Mr. Jeevan joined in with energy, and even the sponsor herself rolled up her sleeves to help in the collection.



The highlight came when the Commissioner, Shri Rajendra Cholan, visited the site. His presence added encouragement, showing everyone that this effort mattered not just for the market, but for the whole city.



By the end of the day, the results spoke for themselves:

- **1000 kilos of fruits**
- **3000 kilos of corn**
- **2 tons of sugarcane**

All of this was sent to Sri Vrindavana Goshala, where nearly 200 cattle were fed for two full days. Flowers that couldn't be sent were composted, returning to the soil to nourish new life.



What began as a memory in 2022 became a powerful story in 2025 — a story of continuity, unity, and responsibility. Vendors gave their support, the community stood together, and faith found a new form of expression — one that cared not just for the deity, but also for the Earth.

The Annamma Devi Festival of 2025 will be remembered not only for its beauty but also for its heart. A festival where devotion lit up the market, and responsibility lit up the future.