

# DOWNTOWN

Sunday  
July 20, 2025

THE HINDU

**ANNA NAGAR**

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## SNIPPETS



**Move over  
Red Hills bus  
terminus evokes  
mixed response**

PHOTOS : B.JOTHI RAMALINGAM & VELANKANNI RAJ. B

Metropolitan Transport Corporation bus terminus in Red Hills on GNT Road is getting a facelift. According to Metropolitan Transport Corporation, the project is being carried out by Naravarikuppam Town Panchayat. To facilitate the work, the terminus has been shifted to a parcel of vacant land opposite Puzhal lake on GNT Road.

The move has evoked a mixed response. In light of the long-time issue of space constraint at the original terminus, some commuters feel the terminus could

have been shifted permanently to a spacious facility.

"At the original terminus, with no dedicated space for any route number, buses would be parked in a haphazard manner. It would take considerable time for a bus to exit and enter the terminus. A driver would often move his bus elsewhere for another to take his out of the terminus," says a commuter.

As far as the temporary terminus is concerned, commuters have expressed their anxiety about the dumping of garbage that happens in the vicinity.

### STEM facility coming up at park in Perambur

A STEM facility to promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics among children is under construction at Murasoli Maran Park on Perambur High Road - South. According to Greater Chennai Corporation, the facility is being developed at a cost of ₹5.54 crore.

While welcoming the facility, Raghukumar Choodamani, convenor of Perambur Neighbourhood Development Forum, draws attention to the lack of safety at the park, as evidenced by liquor bottles there, as also the inadequate CCTV surveillance. "The existing cameras at the park's entrance are focussed only on the road," he observes.

The park is at Zone 6 - Thiru Vi Ka Nagar.



### 'Expedite renovation of Welcome Colony park'



Residents of Welcome Colony in Anna Nagar Western Extension want the renovation of the park in their neighbourhood expedited. They note that work did not progress after demolition of the compound walls last September. A few months ago, the work gathered momentum the walkway and compound being reconstructed. Play equipment are yet to be installed. According to Greater Chennai Corporation, the renovation will be completed in a month; a gym will be set up at the park.

*Compiled by L. Kanthimathi*

### Pedestrians in peril at Thirumangalam junction



Motorists tend to violate traffic signal at the intersection of Ambattur - Industrial Estate Road and 100 Feet Jawharlal Nehru Main Road in Thirumangalam, often putting pedestrians in peril.



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## Street in Jamalia turned into a 'dirt track'

CMWSSB work left halfway on Second Street in State Bank Officers Colony in Jamalia is putting residents to immense hardship, say residents

M.S. JANARDAN

**S**econd Street at State Bank Officers Colony in Jamalia, Perambur was opened up by Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) for both sewage and Metro water work. And the approach to this twin work is best described as lackadaisical. The work has been left

halfway with the dug-up area filled up in a slipshod manner. The showers witnessed in recent days have exacerbated the condition of the road. The resultant situation is one of utter inconvenience and sometimes chaos, particularly when a resident musters courage to drive through the road and finds their wheels stuck.

Commercial vehicles and two-



The state of Second Street in State Bank Officers Colony in Jamalia. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

wheelers getting stuck in the soggy earth is not an unusual sight. For nearly ten days, when the road has been in his state, residents have kept their cars and two-wheelers confined to their parking spaces at home, and thrown themselves upon the mercy of app-based cab and auto aggregators. Citing the hardship of driving into this road, cab and auto drivers demand an extra payment, and left with no choice, residents cough up the money. Some residents have parked their vehicles elsewhere. First Street was also dug up by CMWSSB but those residents were on a slightly better wicket, as only sewage work was being carried out there, not Metro water work. Residents of Second Street are desperate to see the road being restored to a motorable state.

(Janardan M.S. is a resident of Second Street in State Bank Officers Colony, Jamalia)



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## 'Subway construction makes slow progress'



The subway under construction and commuters crossing the tracks at Ambattur railway station.  
PHOTOS: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

**D**ue to construction of a subway at Ambattur railway station, small bus service S75 skips MTH Road which is near the station.

The service connects TVS Lucas - Padi and Ambattur OT bus terminus via Korattur, Karukku, Menambedu, Venkatapuram and Old MTH Road.

As the bus skips MTH Road, commuters go to nearby stops, either Venkatapuram or Ambattur OT bus terminus.

This is quite inconvenient; MTC should include GNG Street (Varadarajapuram) as a temporary measure.

Besides, the authorities should complete the construction of the



subway at the earliest. The work is progressing at a slow pace. The subway would prevent commuters from crossing the railway tracks.

T. Gunaseelan,  
Amabattur

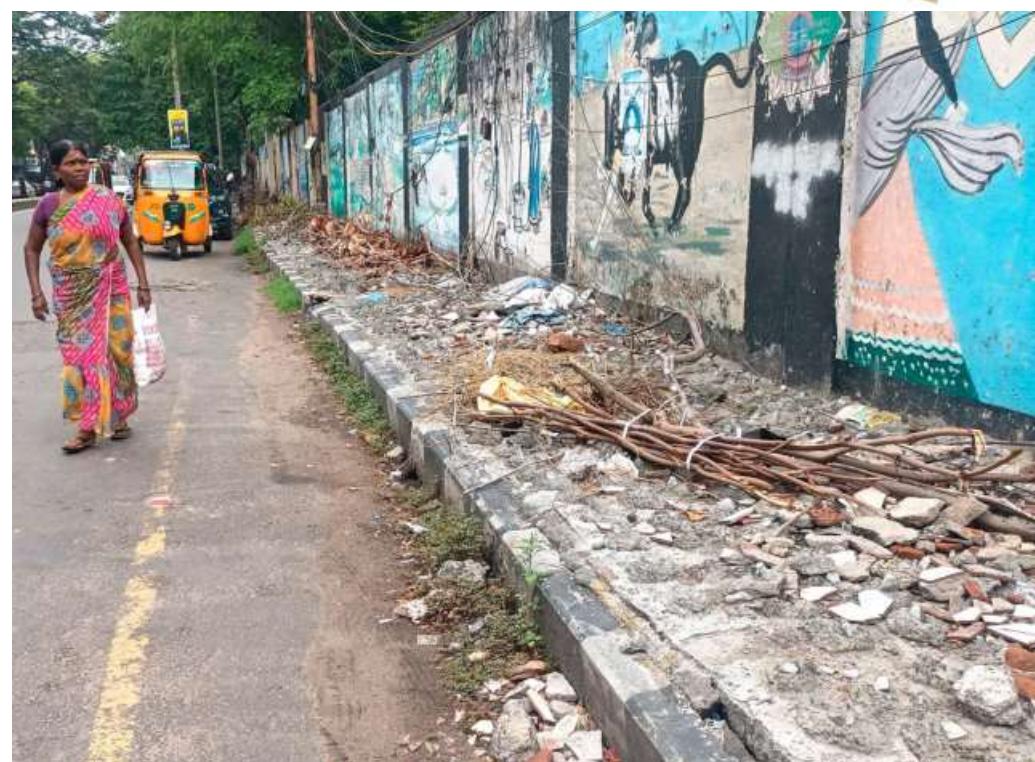
## 'Nehru Street is battered'

Sewage pipe-laying work which began a month ago at Nehru Street - Second Left Cross at Gandhi Nagar in Pattabiram is progressing at a slow pace. Avadi Corporation should ensure that the work is completed and the road restored at the earliest. Because of the work, the road is in a bad shape. With heaps of dug up soil, motorists and pedestrians find it difficult. Following the recent rain, the road has gone from bad to worse.

A. Roy Rozario, founder, Peoples Voice, a citizens forum in Pattabiram



## Scant regard for pedestrians



A section of the footpath along the compound wall of Madras Veterinary College Hostel on Vepery Main Road is unfriendly to pedestrians. This footpath has been in this state or the past few months, say residents.  
PHOTO. RAGU R

## Workshop on making herbal cosmetic products

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute is organising a workshop on making herbal skin care cosmetic products from July 23 to 25 at its premises at SIDCO Industrial Estate, EDII Office Road, Guindy. Time: From 9.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The session would focus on making soaps, shams-

poos and oils. Those aged above 18 and who have completed class 10 can take part. Prior registration is necessary. Air-conditioned hostel facility at affordable rates for men and women are available.

For details, call 8668102600 / 8072914694.

## Choolaimedu club to meet today

Choolaimedu Exnora is organising its annual meet on July 20 at Karur Vysya Bank Staff Cooperative Society hall, No: 2, Fourth Street, Sowrastra Nagar, Choolaimedu. For details, call 98406 06162.

## You can be our volunteer-writer

Dear readers, you can be our volunteer-writer by writing to us about issues and events in your neighbourhood. You should send the write-ups to [downtownfeedback@thehindu.co.in](mailto:downtownfeedback@thehindu.co.in). Letters must carry the contact number.



A wheelchair user's experience at the Chintadripet MRTS station



Many commuters using MRTS have often reported that lifts and escalators are non-functional causing inconvenience, particularly to those with mobility challenges. On July 18, a commuter in a wheelchair, who regularly travels between Velachery and Chintadripet, was seen being helped by a small group of commuters to descend the stairs of the station as the lifts were not working. It was around 11.30 a.m. and the commuter who works as a fruit vendor stopped fellow commuters and sought their help. A few school students also joined in. TEXT AND PHOTOS: RAGU R

## Fresh hope for Chetpet residents



J. Kumargurubaran, Commissioner of GCC, accompanied by Egmore MLA I. Paranthamen and engineers from the Bridge division of GCC visited the site and studied the problem. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The destination they sought has been long in the coming – they felt the way someone travelling on the trans-Siberian train route probably would. This comparison is in fact ridiculous: unlike the one holding a ticket on a trans-Siberian train journey, they were never certain about reaching their destination.

And now, twenty-three years on, they are seeing the hazy outlines of the “destination”, which is

close to the Chepauk railway station. It is really an objective (and not a destination) and there are encouraging signs that it could be met, finally.

Residents of Chetpet have been seeking a safe passageway under the Dr. Gurusamy ROB (Rail Over Bridge) for decades, from one side of Chetpet to another as this would enable residents, particularly children of five schools, to reach the Chetpet railway station safely without having to cross the ROB.

On July 19, 2025, the solution avidly sought for well over two decades seemed to resonate with the

powers that be. Dr. Gurusamy ROB comes under the bridges division of Greater Chennai Corporation.

Kripa Sagar Janardhanan, who has been in the vanguard of the effort by Chetpet residents to have this safe passageway, reports what transpired on the day at Dr. Gurusamy ROB. “J. Kumargurubaran, Commissioner of GCC accompanied by Egmore MLA I. Paranthamen and engineers from the Bridge division of GCC visited the site and studied the problem. As per discussion it is understood that GCC is likely to insert prefabricated concrete boxes having about 12 feet

height by pushing them inside the ROB to make a walkway as they have done similar works elsewhere,” says Kripa Sagar.

Based on the discussion with engineers of GCC’s Bridge Division, Kripa Sagar notes that as the columns between which the passageway is expected to be created are a safe distance away from tracks, an NOC from Southern Railway might not be required; and even if it were required, it could be obtained.

Kripa Sagar observes that when a safe passageway under the ROB is facilitated, the event would signal a return to the past. He offers a peek into a history, which also includes residents’ battle to recover what was lost.

The pathway beneath Dr. Gurusamy ROB which connected the South West and South East of the ROB, enabled the residents, students and teachers of five educational institutions and office goers

to reach the Chetpet Railway station safely with ease. In 2002, Southern Railway extended their shunting line over the Path way to shunt their long length trains depriving the public their comfortable and safe access to the railway station.

Since then MCC School and the local residents have been making efforts to get safe access. Various proposals were made but nothing materialised. Construction work by CMRL at Chetpet Metro and diversion of traffic from Harrington Road by the traffic police only piled on the misery as they had to take a long circuitous route to reach the Chetpet railway station. In response to efforts taken by the MCC School and the local residents, Egmore MLA I. Paranthamen took up the issue with the Commissioner of GCC. If this passageway comes up, the problem pending since 2002 will end.”

# Three Rosarians' gift to their alma mater

As Rosary Matriculation Higher Secondary School celebrates its platinum jubilee, three old students — architect Priya Lourduraj, Japanese language trainer Matengi S. Suresh and medical doctor Malini A.V. — have spearheaded an effort to gather alumni down the decades

LIFFY THOMAS

**W**hat does it take to organise a grand all-batches alumni reunion of an institution that has 75 years behind it, and never a formal alumni association in all those years?

Three busy women professionals — architect Priya Lourduraj, Japanese language trainer Matengi S. Suresh and Dr. Malini A.V. — can take that question. If this trio's experience is anything to go by, one needs to extend one's waking hours a wee bit.

In October 2024, these three old students of Rosary Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Santhome got started on an effort to gather alumni down the decades and they are still finding themselves in a last-minute scramble to tie loose ends. The platinum jubilee meetup of old students across batches and retired teachers would also signal the formation of an alumni association.

A previous attempt 15



Alumnae of Rosary Matriculation Higher Secondary School during a meeting held in June.

years ago to have an association of this kind was spectacularly stillborn.

With the D-day drawing near — the alumni reunion and platinum jubilee carnival would take place on the school campus on July 26 — they are both excited and nervous.

Excited, as they survey what they have achieved in the past months and look forward to the culmination of the effort on July 26. Ner-

vous, as anyone is expected to be ahead of a grand event they are responsible for.

One challenge that stared them in the face was getting a buy-in from the school management to organise the mega reunion. The next major thing was to have an alumni association registered.

"We have enrolled ourselves under the Society of Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, the congregation that runs the school. The associa-

tion is now a formal entity under the Society, so that helped us plan for the D-Day, and this also gives us more credibility," says Priya, who graduated from the institution in 2003 and is an architect by profession.

As is the case with any registered body, Rosary Alumni Association will maintain accounts and have an executive team elected.

Towards

spelling out the goals and objectives of the alumni association, they have published the charter on the school website.

And then what they dreaded — bringing old Rosarians on board — seemed easier than expected thanks to social media.

"We were surprised to find the enthusiasm of students across batches in connecting with the school. When we started seeking out representatives from each batch to help us plan the reunion and find their classmates, we immediately got a response from 1962, 1964, 1965 batches," says Matengi, a student of the 1992 batch.

"The WhatsApp group currently has 65 members across batches who are a big support to us," says Matengi, who is course director at the Japanese Language School of the Indo Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The batch representatives act as a first level of validation before classmates are added to the group.

The core team

has been meeting in person every month. As they have reached the last leg of the preparation, intense discussions happen every day.

Matengi is in-charge of registrations, Priya acts as a bridge between the school and the alumni and Malini coordinates with the sponsors.

They have sub committees to assist them. They include a PR team, an emcee team and a cultural team.

Over the last month, 35-40 representatives, each representing a batch, also met to discuss the progress as well address concerns.

Dr. Malini, who is based in Bangalore, says two major social initiatives that the alumni would be driving are sponsoring deserving students studying in the school and helping retired teachers with medical assistance and other financial support.

The trio want every Rosarian to be part of the reunion. And if one is unsure about making it to the meetup they could at least register so that they can be part of future events.

## 75 years of education in a nutshell

Old students and associates of Rosary Matriculation Higher Secondary School jog their memory and seek to capture this institution's place in the city's history

### 'One of the early Matriculation schools in Madras'

I am from the first batch of students (1950) who went to Rosary Matriculation School. My sister was studying at St. Raphael's Girls School, which followed Tamil medium of instruction, and the nuns asked my father to enrol me with Rosary as it had just opened.

It was kind of trendy to study in a matriculation school then and there were only four such schools for girls in Madras of those times — Sacred Heart, Good Shepherd and CSI Ewarts being the others. Most of our school years were spent on the campus at Kutchery Road, and for a while we also shared space with Stella Matutina College of Education.

Students of all matriculation schools had to come to Lady Willingdon College to write their exams and it was customary to be taken to St. Thomas Mount before appearing for the examination. Our results were displayed on the Madras University's big notice board and parents would troop in early in the morning to see their children's marks.

Dr. Swarnalatha Selvaraju is 79 years old and lives in Malaysia

### "Rosary used to be a co-educational institution"

Now, one would automatically associate Rosary with education for girls, but in its early years until Fifth Form this was a co-educational institution. I have shared bench with boys as my classmates. While a ma-



A roofless bus stop opposite Rosary Matriculation School in Santhome on November 8, 1978. PHOTO: THE HINDU ARCHIVES

jority of the staff were women, Sanskrit and Tamil subjects were handled by two male teachers.

Among the gains from studying at this institution are: a disciplined approach to life and work and a whole lot of skills including good spoken English.

The sisters were particular about how we dressed to school, and plays and dance drama brought out histrionic talent in many of us. We had two houses — Loretto and Fatima, the former identified by pink and the latter, blue. Pinafores and half saris were worn as uniform.

I was once made the "bank agent", an activity where we collect-

In the run-up to Madras Day in August, look for features about iconic institutions of the city in these pages

phael's was one of the oldest schools. Sometimes, one would find students moving from one school to another on the same road. Once they completed middle school at Montfort School, they would move to the next building, which would be Santhome High School. And students of Dominic Savio would join St. Bedes.

My two sisters pursued their school education in Santhome, one studying at St. Raphael's and the other at Rosary. Rosary operated a school bus, a novelty in those times. My elder sister, Late Meenakshi Subramanian served as chemistry teacher at Rosary and many of her students including "Apollo sisters" and retired Judge Prabha Sridevan were in touch with her.

So strict were the nuns that yesterday actor and an old student of the school L. Vijayalakshmi was not permitted to sit for the matric university exam as she did not attend the selection exam.

Where the present Rosary Matriculation School is, Stella Maris College used to be before it moved to Cathedral Road in the late 50s.

K.R. Jambunathan is a long time resident of Mylapore and has been chronicling hidden stories of the neighbourhood

# Finding purpose underwater

Archana Thiagarajan had a memorable time representing India at the World Championship in Japan; she set new national records

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**A**rchana Thiagarajan is now lolling around at her parents' home in Perungalathur, diving headlong into a world of delectable inactivity. She deserves the spot of relaxation she has found in a familiar environment.

Squadron Leader Archana (retd) is back from the 34th AIDA Freediv-

ing World Championship in Wakayama, Japan. She is the first woman to represent India at this championship, which will remain memorable not just for the aforementioned reason. The 33-year-old athlete set four new national records across all pool disciplines, making her a 10-time national record holder in freediving.

Her journey into freediving happened by chance during a sabbatical in Indonesia, after she completed a decade of service with the Indian Air Force as technical officer.

Taking notice of the accolades she had won at the national level representing Tamil Nadu, an instructor introduced her to freediving, the practice of diving underwater on a single breath without the use of a breathing apparatus.

In less than one-and-a-half years, Archana has proved disci-

plice and determination can break barriers in any sport.

"Forty-nine countries and 234 participants were in the fray in this international event, and I was able to break the Indian national record in all the four events that I took part in," says Archana.

Freediving is open to those aged above 18. Over the last six months, she has been preparing for the competition, training at Puducherry and Philippines as well as at pools in Chennai and Bangalore.

"Freediving is considered an extreme sport and you cannot train alone, so my husband has been a pillar of strength. He takes care of my safety," says Archana. She notes that her background in NCC and her stint with the Indian Air Force have helped her in the sport.

An avid yoga enthusiast, Archana says the sport emphasises relaxation, breath control and mental



Archana Thiagarajan at the World Championship in Wakayama, Japan.

## School celebrates golden jubilee

Kola Saraswathi Vaishnav Senior Secondary School celebrated its golden jubilee recently. According to a press release, Chandra Mohan, Principal Secretary, School Educa-

tion Department, was the chief guest.

Cultural events such as dance, drama, and a documentary on the school were part of the event. On the occasion, the school's new logo was unveiled and its souvenir was released.

Further meritorious students and dedicated teachers were honoured, adds the release.



## Winners of Thirukkural contests announced

Students from institutions in Mogappair and Arumbakkam came first in the speech competition organised by Shriram Ilakkiya Kazhagam at CSI Jessie Moses Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Anna Nagar.

More than 900 school and college students from Chennai, Thiruvallur, Poona-mallee, Thiruttani, and Thiruporur took part in Thirukkural speech, essay writing, and drawing competitions held under various categories. More than 405 students took part in the drawing competition, said a release.

N. Arul, director, Tamil Development Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, was the special guest for the Thirukkural competitions.

First prize winners of the speech competition are: R. Riyadharshini, Velammal Vi-

dalya, Mogappair West (junior category); S. Jebashibani, Velammal Vidyalaya, Mogappair West (senior category) and V. San-geetha, Government Siddha Medical College, Arumbakkam (college category).

In the drawing competition S. Rithika of Dr. Vimala Convent Metric Hr. Sec. School, Ramapuram; S. Kaushik, Velammal Vidyalaya, Mogappair West and P. Abirami, Valiammal Women's College, Anna Nagar are winners in the junior, senior and college categories respectively.

In essay competition C. Padmadhaaran of Everwin Matric Hr. Sec. School, Kolattur; D. Rudra, of Government Girls Hr. Sec. School, Porur and P. Dhivyadharshini, Sri Kanyaga Parameswari Women's Arts and Science College, George Town were declared winners.

## Recitation of Thiruvazhaga Mutrothal on July 23

The recitation of Thiruvazhaga Mutrothal will be held at Valampuri Varasiddhi Vinayagar Temple, Ganapathy Colony, Anna Nagar East, on July 23. Time: At 3 p.m. According to a press release, the recitation is held every month on Shivarathri.

For details, call 9444543679.



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