

TAMBARAM

Chromepet » Pallavaram » Tambaram West » Rajakilpakkam » Mannivakkam » Guindy » Keelkattalai » Nanganallur » Guduvanchery » Hasthinapuram » Pammal » Tambaram East
Medavakkam » Srinivasa Nagar » Kathipara Junction » Kovilambakkam » Sadasivam Nagar » Potheri » Selaiyur » Sembakkam » St.Thomas Mount » Madipakkam » Urappakkam » Paranur

Join these volunteers today at Chitlapakkam

It is the second leg of a pond clean-up along Sree Gangaiamman Temple on Nehru Street

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Last Sunday, a good number of resident volunteers gathered at the pond attached to Sree Gangaiamman Temple on Nehru Street in Chitlapakkam.

Initiated by Chitlapakkam Rising, the programme had volunteers clearing the revetment walls

of trash, vegetation and sand. In the water-holding area, they removed garbage and weeds.

Sunil Jayaram, a core volunteer of Chitlapakkam Rising, says residents faced severe water scarcity during summer.

"The pond was overrun with grass and moss, and was not desilted for years. The water in the bore-



Volunteers at the pond. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

wells and wells had depleted. The restoration exercise will help recharge the groundwater."

The exercise follows the installa-

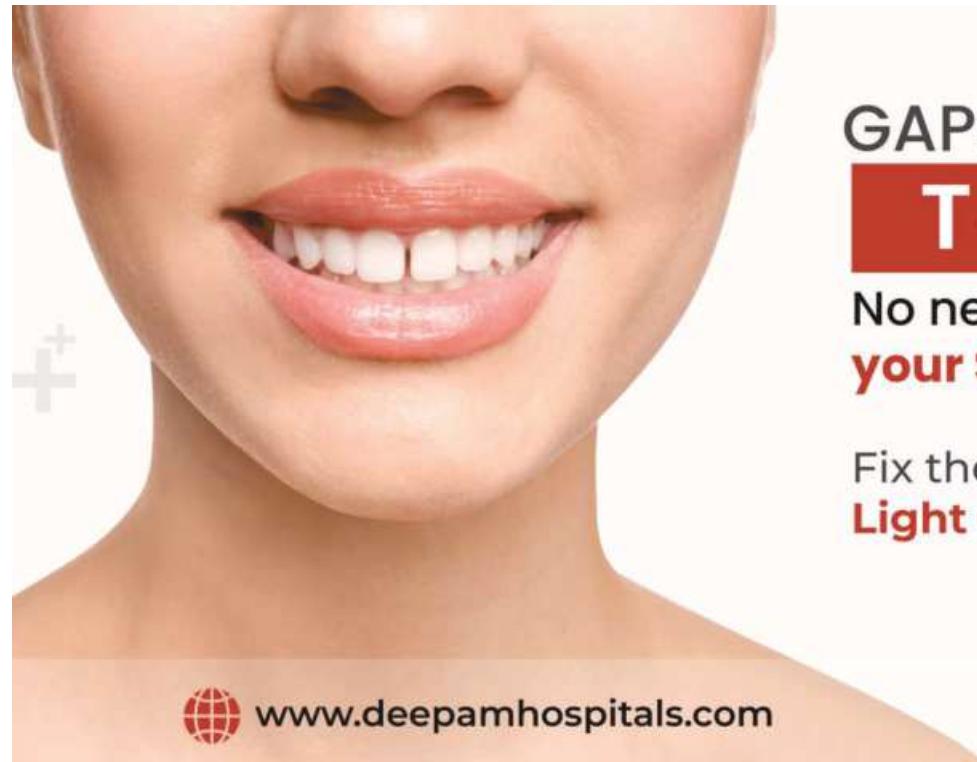
tion of a pipe by the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation to divert Chitlapakkam Lake excess water to the pond, thereby maintaining the

groundwater level.

Chitlapakkam residents and volunteers from the Ainthinai and Uyir teams, school students from NSN Memorial School, staff from the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation, and Ward 34 councilor P. Subashini Purushothaman were among those who took part in it.

"Around 30 percent of the silt has been removed. On July 27, we will remove the remaining silt and scrape the area for percolation. The removed silt area has been scrapped for water percolation. The cleaning activity will commence at 6 a.m. and we invite volunteers to join us."

For details, call Sunil Jayaram at 95001 22151.



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'Risky junction on Bypass Road'

The Tambaram Eastern Bypass Road and Mappedu - Vengambakkam Road have become increasingly unsafe due to the absence of traffic signals and speed breakers.

Frequent accidents and near misses have raised serious safety concerns among residents and daily road users.

The motorists zip through the intersection without regard for safety, making the junction unsafe during rush hour.

There are good number of residential

houses and educational institutions in the vicinity with a steady flow of traffic through the day.

I request that the traffic wing of the Tambaram Police Commissionerate facilitate the installation of traffic signals, speed breakers and signage boards to ensure safety of road users. The necessary measures should be taken as soon as possible to prevent any untoward incident.

Iyñesh Kumar is a resident of Puthur, Mappedu



'Pedestrians at risk on North Parade Road'



The manhole covers on the pedestrian walkway along North Parade Road in the Saint Thomas Mount region are broken – and some, missing – for months posing a risk to pedestrians' safety.

The Saint Thomas Mount and Pallavaram Cantonment Board has not responded to the issue. I hope the authorities concerned visit the area and do the needful soon.

K. Selvam is a resident of Saint Thomas Mount

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. Letters must carry the contact number.

'Incomplete sewer network in Perungalathur'

Work on constructing the sewer network under the New Perungalathur flyover is incomplete. Having been opened up for this work, the carriageway is uneven and non-motorable.

Will the concerned authorities visit the work site and take steps to ensure completion of the remaining work and alleviate the road users' woes?

L. Ramesh



Anjaneyar Kovil Street

'Vital road in Chromepet is in a shambles'

Anjaneyar Kovil Street at Nehru Nagar in Chromepet is a bustling road, but is poorly maintained. This concrete road is in a shambles with many potholes and patchworks. It has not been relaid

for years and its current deplorable condition poses a significant risk to the public's safety.

Tambaram City Municipal Corporation has allocated a sum of ₹156 crores for road work across areas under its jurisdiction. The road should be relaid to provide a safe driving experience for road users.

V. Santhanam is a resident of Chromepet

'A noisy situation at a Tambaram park'

The Madras High Court issued a judgement that worship at places of worship should be carried out silently, without disturbing the public. However, in West Tambaram, a temple constructed in the park area violates this rule. During festive times, a large number of devotees camp in adjacent streets for days without any basic amenities causing sanitary and civic issues, law and order problems. The use of loudspeakers should be curtailed, and the Tambaram Police Commissionerate should deploy its personnel to prevent crowding and camping.

R. Guruswamy is a resident of Tambaram (West)

'Deploy traffic police on Bharathiya Street'

Bharathiya Street in Guduvancheri is a vital stretch, connecting GST Road, the region's flyover, and the railway station. The stretch is a traffic bottleneck in the evenings, due to two-wheelers being parked on both sides of the road. There are no dedicated pedestrian pavements. Autos are parked near the flyover, adding to the chaos. I request the traffic wing of the Tambaram Police Commissionerate to deploy its personnel in the evenings to regulate the smooth flow of traffic on this stretch.

P. Thirumalai is a resident of Guduvanchery

'Police booth in Thiruthani Nagar is marked for demolition'

With reference to the news article published in these pages on July 20 titled "Police booth at Pallavaram in a neglected state", the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Tambaram District, Tambaram City Police, has clarified that under the jurisdiction of the Pallavaram Police Station, four police assistance booths are actively functioning in the following sectors.

They are a) Bazar Sector: Police assistance booth near Aathithanar Mandapam; b) Bharathi Nagar Sector: Police assistance booth within Bharathi Nagar; c) Thirsoolam Sector: Police assistance booth near the Thirsoolam Panchayat Board Office; and d) Thiruthani Nagar Sector: Police assis-

tance booth on 200 Feet Road, located at Arulmurgan Towers.

The specific booth referred to in the article located within the Thiruthani urban sector is no longer in use due to lack of essential facilities such as restrooms and toilets.

Therefore, an alternative and fully functional police assistance booth has been established on 200 Feet Road at Arulmurgan Towers. This booth effectively covers the areas of Thiruthani Nagar, A.R.G. Nagar, and Pallava Garden.

The previously existing booth in Thiruthani Nagar, which has become non-functional and redundant, is currently abandoned and marked for demolition.





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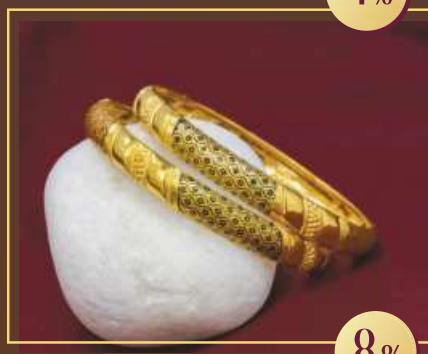
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RWA submits petition to Collectorate

Office bearers of Nesamani Nagar Residents Welfare Association in Perumbakkam have submitted a letter to the Chengalpattu District Collectorate, requesting the establishment of an Animal Birth Control centre in the area.

Some months ago, N. K. Raja, the association's president, filed an RTI addressed to the Collectorate, stating that the anti-rabies vaccination and sterilisation procedures for stray dogs in Perumbakkam should be better implemented.

The current population of strays poses a threat to residents. The Animal Husbandry Department in Chitlapakkam stated that as per the ABC Rules 2023, the local authority should conduct the ABC programme after obtaining a certificate of project recognition from the Animal Welfare Board, which is mandatory.

It is the role and the responsibility of local authority to look into this matter and act.

Currently, in St. Thomas Mount Block, ABC centres are functioning under the control of local authorities in Zones 11, 12, 13, and 14. The centres are implementing the ABC programmes for community dogs in the block.

If a need arises, the local authority responsible for the region should undertake the creation and maintenance of an ABC centre for community dogs in Perumbakkam, the reply added.

"Based on the reply, we have sent a letter to the Collectorate to establish an ABC centre in Perumbakkam region, and a resolution will be passed (Perumbakkam Village Panchayat) at the Gram Sabha meeting to be held on August 15," said Raja.

Text: T.S. Atul Swaminathan



Saplings in memory of parents

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

M. Ravi, secretary of the Sri Sarvamangala Nagar Residents' Association in Chitlapakkam, made the 101st birth anniversary of his parents memorable.

On July 20, M. Ravi and his family members planted more than 120 saplings at Thinnalur village.

"The saplings were planted on seven acres of a government land and arrangements were made to prevent cows from entering the plantation area. The saplings will be taken care of by Thinnalur Gram Panchayat, Acharapakkam Panchayat Union, Chengalpattu," says Ravi, a social activist.

Saplings of moongil, naval, punnai, and pungai were distributed by Sharan Raj of Vidhaigal,



M. Ravi and his family members at the plantation drive at Thinnalur village. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

an NGO in Walajabad.

On July 21, the birth anniversary of his parents, Muthiya Ramasamy and M. Neelaveni Muthiya, Ravi along with students from the Government Middle School, planted 40 saplings on the school premises to raise awareness among students about the benefits of trees.

Nizhal, an NGO involved in tree protection and greening activities, donated over 50 saplings.

A raft of issues presented at grievance meeting

Residents of Nanganallur turned in large numbers at 'Ungaludan Stalin', a grievance redressal camp conducted at a skating ground.

Petitions ranged from 'Kalaigai Magalir Urimai Thogai Thittam' to issues relating to the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board.

The Federation of Nanganallur Residents' Welfare Associations submitted a petition urging the State Government to establish a library in the region.

More than 700 petitions were received from residents, mostly relating to Magalir Urimai Thogai Thittam, said V. Rama Rao, advisor of the Federation of Nanganallur Residents' Welfare Associations.

The Revenue and Disaster Management Department received more than 70 petitions, followed by the Information and Technology Department, which includes Aadhaar and E-Seva services received more than 40 petitions.

Representations were submitted to the Food and Consumer Protection, Housing and Urban Development, Police, and the Health and Family Welfare Departments.

The camp was inaugurated by the Alandur constituency Member of the Legislative Assembly T. M. Anbarasan.



A resident of Nanganallur hands over a petition to T. M. Anbarasan; and (below) K. Vasanthakumari Kamalakannan receives a representation.

sues efficiently."

At Chitlapakkam

Chitlapakkam Muthulakshmi Nagar Welfare Association vice president, S. Sekar, and joint secretary, J. Prasannan, participated in the camp and handed over the petitions to Tambaram City Municipal Cor-

poration Mayor K. Vasanthakumari Kamalakannan.

The Corporation conducted the camp for localities coming under Ward 43.

The issues included are reconstruction of a stormwater drain network on Viswamitrar Street, re-lying of Pugazhendi Street, and Sairam Street, clearing of bushes around a well located adjacent to the locality park, providing a roof over the dias in the park to enable elders to sit after taking a walk, inclusion of Chitlapakkam region in the Chennai Metro Water Scheme, increasing the services frequency of S3 and S100 and introduction of share autos from Tambaram Sanatorium to various parts of Chitlapakkam, said L. Sundararaman, president of the association.

Remembering Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

Department of Social Work (Aided), MCC, in collaboration with ICSSR, conducted the two-day national meet

The Department of Social Work (Aided), Madras Christian College, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and the Ministry of Education, Government of India, recently organised a two-day national seminar on "Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's Commitment to Social Justice and Tribal Rights: Revisiting His Contributions in Light of Vision Viksit Bharat 2047".

The seminar convened a distinguished cohort of over 150 delegates, including academicians, scholars, policymakers, bureaucrats, practitioners, tribal leaders, and social work students from across the country.

Sonajharia Minz, UNESCO Co-Chair on Transforming Indigenous Knowledge, Research Governance, and Rematriation, delivered the keynote address illuminating the global significance of preserving indigenous knowledge systems in national development. Notable dignitaries attending the event included Padala Bhudevi, recipient of the Nari Shakti Puraskar and ICAR National Best Farmer Award.

A curated exhibition of tribal products and enterprises was organised in partnership with Social Watch-Tamil Nadu, TRIFED, TAHD-CO, Startup Tamil Nadu, TN-RISE, and the MCC-MRF Innovation Park.

The conveners of this seminar were Sudharsan and Prince Solomon Devadass from the Department of Social Work (Aided), along with student convenors Niyva R. and Rasitha, under the guidance of P. Wilson, principal and secretary, Madras Christian College, said a release.

ENVIRONMENT

In the spirit of Aadi Pattam, a tradition celebrating the sowing season, stretching from mid-July to mid-August, The Hindu Downtown will feature efforts by individuals and groups to green neighbourhoods in Chennai

Pasumai Murthy is always on the lookout for new places across Chennai that would do with some added greenery; and he is a one-member tree-planting group



Pasumai Murthy during various greening drives.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



The green files

Pasumai Murthy's tree planting stats include an impressive greening effort at Kotturpuram hockey ground, Besant Nagar beach and Central Leather Research Institute (only two months ago, when he planted 30 saplings on the campus)

He planted trees near 15 flower shops so that vendors would not have to come in direct contact with the sun. Besides, he has also bought parasols with the words 'Grow Trees, Get Rain' printed across them for roadside workers, cobblers and flower sellers.

During the pandemic, he invited government staff -- judges, electricity board officers and traffic police personnel among them -- to plant saplings.

People could process tree-planting exercises by groups, but not by a lone wolf. Sneers came his way; he smiled them off. He recalls being ridiculed by visitors to a Corporation gym while planting saplings at Besant Nagar beach. Now, he counts those same faces among his host of supporters, his consistent efforts to plant saplings and water them earning him their admiration. The admiration derives in part from the fact that he digs into his own pocket to keep this service going – well, growing. At a time, he buys a bundle of net-type material costing ₹1,700 out of which 25 tree guards can be made, on an average. For support to those tree guards, he buys 50 iron rods (thick and six feet long) which set him back by anywhere between ₹5000 and ₹6,000 depending on their weight. And he buys saplings from a nursery in Akkarai where he is assured of a discount by virtue of being a long-time buyer. Obviously, given the financial sacrifice all of this entails, he has got buy-in from his family to do this service. Being reasonable in the allocation of time has helped him win them over: the first half of every Sunday he reserves for tree-planting and the course of the second half is scripted by his wife Maria Priya and his daughter Meha M. He has received a doctorate degree from the The Academy of Universal Global Peace for this work.

Sincerity written all over it, his service has brought a warm glow to many an eye. During an awards ceremony, retired honourable judge S. Soundarapandian bestowed this title 'Pasumai' upon Murthy. It was not part of the event's bill of fare. The name has stuck – given Murthy's sincerity, it was bound to.

If you think your patch would do with some added greenery, call Pasumai Murthy at 7299022269/9171070949

A solo green tour

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

He travels fastest who travels alone". M.V. Murthy has substantiated that thought from Rudyard Kipling. In 12 years, he has set 8,125 saplings in soil and seen them through to maturity. He has gone it alone – at multiple levels. No volunteers to work shoulder to shoulder with. No fundraising to support the purchase of native-tree saplings and tree guards. The only "volunteer" who tags along with Murthy on every tree-planting spree is his steadfastly loyal Honda Activa. The only source of funding is his wallet.

At 5.30 a.m., when people are snoozing alarms, Pasumai Murthy (as he is popularly known) ranges around some Chennai neighbourhood, a plastic pot filled with water lodged in the wide floorboard of his step-through bike. After serving the saplings their "breakfast", he gets his own, and around 9 a.m., the Activa is headed to his workplace, which lacks a fixed address. An assistant manager with Ramaniyam Builders, he is not desk-bound, his brief requiring him to visit construction sites. While strapping on the ratchet-type safe-



ty helmet, he puts on an invisible green cap. During the visits to those work sites, his mind maps spots where the Chennai sun stings the hardest, shadows being scarce. These are stark landscapes devoid of trees to offer respite from a glaring sun.

A sprightly 55-year-old, Pasumai Murthy got that title in his name, built this routine into his workaday life only after he had completed four decades on planet earth, 42 years to be exact. If a human being changes tack after having clocked so many years, simply assume a dramatic event brought about that change. Before Ramaniyam Builders, he had employers in different

climes: qualified in hotel management, he worked as housekeeping in-charge for Emirates and Kuwait Airways, spending three years in Dubai and five in Kuwait. In those days, he would set foot in Chennai during summer – going by how his life had panned out, destiny had ordained it that way. During one such summer break, in May 2013, at Vannanthurai junction, not far from his diggings in Vannanthurai in Adyar, the absence of something familiar made him acutely aware of it. A stand of trees had been removed on account of road expansion. A couple of children ran barefoot on baking tar. Elders leaned helplessly against sun-scorched

compound walls.

"That moment hit me," he says. "If we can cut down trees in a day, why not grow them with equal urgency?" On August 15 that year, at Adyar Junction, he hoisted the national flag, distributed sweets, and planted 15 saplings. He was not doing anything radical, only following a rule that seldom bodes from the paper it is printed on. For every tree that is felled on account of development, ten others need to be planted. Having returned to Chennai for good (honouring his daughter's request), he kept the momentum of that act going, planting 10 to 15 saplings wherever he can every Sunday.

EMPOWERMENT

Sunday, July 27, 2025
THE HINDU • Chennai

LIFFY THOMAS

Seventeen members from Tamil Nadu Wheelchair Women Basketball recently received the gift of a wheelchair, thanks to Temenos, a global technology major with a presence in Chennai. This wheelchair is no ordinary one. It can morph from an indoor wheelchair into a road machine. It allows individuals with mobility-related challenges to run their own errands or go to work without reliance on anybody else.

"It is like having my own legs," says Malathi Raja, a wheelchair basketball player who runs an inclusive travel firm.

Malathi also has a standard wheelchair but the nature of her work and frequent travels mean the mobility aid lasts for only two years.

Malathi notes that modifying a wheelchair would cost a minimum of ₹75,000 and many cannot afford expenditure of this proportion. "I own a manual wheelchair in standard format which is not the best for my body type but I have no choice," says Malathi.

The Madipakkam resident is still lucky to own a wheelchair.

According to WHO and UNICEF Global report on assistive technology 2022, of the 80 million people who need a wheelchair, only 5-35% have access to one, depending on the country they live in.

Many NGOs that provide assistive devices for the needy point out that a basic wheelchair lasts four years and most of them are one-size-fits-all.

Wheelchairs tailored to suit requirements of one's body and lifestyle are increasingly hitting the market to cater to persons with mobility challenges, for those imobile due to injuries caused due to accidents and for the growing geriatric population prone to mobility-related issues, but that is still a nascent market.

With a greater proportion of persons with disabilities residing in impoverished communities, these new-age wheelchairs are far from affordable for most of them.

Support by state government

The Commissionerate for Welfare of the Differently Abled has an online application process made available through eSeva centres where modified special wheelchairs and other assistive devices can be availed by the needy.

An official from the department points out they get 25 applications a year from Chennai, which is on the lower side. Many avail these government schemes through special camps. "We also have a choice-based system that allows beneficiaries to choose from a wider range of assistive devices, including models that are not government-assured, with the option to bear any additional cost," says the official from the Department.



A customised wheelchair designed for the roads; and (below) a lightweight wheelchair launched recently at IIT Madras. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT AND THAMODHARAN B

siderably.

"When we were trying to manufacture NeoMotion wheelchairs in India in 2019, it was difficult to find an ecosystem that will fabricate the parts," says Samson, who worked as a clinical occupational therapist. Today, there are more players and more choices for people to choose from rather than dependence on imported devices has reduced.

Swostik Sourav Dash, chief executive officer and co-founder, Neo-Motion, agrees their products are not among the cheapest. "Our products are designed to suit different lifestyle needs and in the process we are solving a different problem," says Swostik. In partnership with Zomato, where they provided electrical wheelchairs to 600 food delivery agents has ensured that the operators earn a steady income.

A different thinking went into the making of the paediatric wheelchair that can recline, tilt and travel.

He says: "The number of children who need a wheelchair is more than young adults, but that is not discussed much because parents carry them till they are in need of one. This one addresses a range of mobility issues of children from as young as four to 14 years."

The three wheels to independence

A wheelchair that morphs into a road machine can empower persons with disabilities. What does it take to reach this advantage to those who need it?

Chennai-based professionals in the inclusivity space weigh in on this question

Many of the companies and institutions working in the area of assistive technologies also liaise with corporates to provide personalised, motorised wheelchairs for persons with disabilities but there is a lot more ground to be covered.

How can the accessibility gap be bridged?

Nath Balakrishnan of The Ganga Foundation says a disability repository is a must. "Clear identification of people in need means more targeted intervention, impacting a far greater population," says Nath.

He says NGOs operating in the same space should ideally have a common backend. "Typically, beneficiaries reach out to several NGOs for support and end up being assisted with multiple products. In a limited-resource environment that we operate in, such duplication must be singularly avoided. A common backend will address this challenge and ensure more unique beneficiaries are added to the accessibility pool," says Nath.

Institutions encourage those with locomotor disability to avail EMI option to procure customised wheelchairs.

Gunasekaran J., general secretary, Tamil Nadu Wheelchair Basketball Association and founder, Sittruli Foundation, says mobility

does not just mean moving within the house on a wheelchair. "We need wheelchair users to move around with the society and earn a livelihood and to achieve that, they would need advanced wheelchairs that can be operated on different terrains. And, we need more corporates coming forward to fund them after doing due diligence about the recipient's credentials," says Gunasekaran.

Affordability factor

Samson Daniel, centre manager, National Centre for Assistive Health Technologies (NCAHT) at IIT Madras, says indigenously made wheelchairs have brought the prices down con-

**The
Commissionerate for
Welfare of the
Differently Abled has
an online
application process
through which it
offers modified special
wheelchairs and other
assistive devices to the
needy**



J. D. Madan's rise in para table tennis will turn naysayers into believers in the power of the human spirit to surmount huge obstacles

K. KEERTHIVASAN

In the early and mid-2000s, J. D. Madan was a hugely scintillating star on the car racing circuit, revelling in the intense pressure at the Irungattukottai track in Sriperumbudur during the National racing championships.

Madan was destined for bigger things when he became the National champion in the Esteem car section at the age of 26 in 2003. But tragedy put paid to that possibility. He met with a near-fatal road accident in 2007 in Mumbai that turned his life upside down. He was paralysed waist down.

Not one to be cowed down by circumstances, Madan soon found purpose in life.

In early 2021, Madan started playing table tennis, and as a veritable sportsperson found success in it as well. He went on to win medals in National para table tennis tournaments and is now ranked No.2 in India in Class I (wheelchair athlete).

Recently, he won multiple medals in ITTF events in Taipei (Future) and Kaohsiung (Challenger). In Kaohsiung, he won silver.

Madan is happy that para table tennis is growing in India, but feels it still has a long way to go.

Para TT in India, according to the 48-year-old, is growing but not

In top gear



J. D. Madan (right) after winning a recent tournament.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

yet at the international level. "We have only Bhavina Patel and Sonalben Patel at the international level. Our grassroots structure is quite good, it is growing," he says.

The difference between top countries and India who do well in para TT is the absence of a strong programme and exposure. "Countries such as Korea, Japan and Thailand have a very strong programme for para table tennis. Actually, it's like a job. They give them a salary. They practice every-

day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the National Training Centre. We have a long way to go," says Madan.

Table Tennis Federation of India said Madan is making good efforts at providing the best for its paddlers. "They are taking players internationally twice a year minimum," he says.

A resident of Alwarpet, Madan loves the security the neighbourhood provides, but rues the complete absence of space for pedestrians.



Madan is not just a champion paddler. He has been active in ensuring the lives of differently abled persons change for the better.

He was part of an NGO called Disability Rights Alliance that has completed big projects with Chennai Corporation. "One project that

we associated was the beach (wooden) pathway for differently abled persons and for every other user on Marina and Besant Nagar Beaches," he said.

On and off the sports field, Madan continues to make an impactful change.



The launch of a new mobile

Poorvika Mobiles, in collaboration with Vivo India, recently launched the Vivo X200FE.

Uvaraj Natarajan, founder of Poorvika Mobiles; Aswani Bhaskar Katneni, chief sales officer; and Sam Mathew, product

trainer, Vivo India; and Karthik, sales head, Vivo Tamil Nadu, took part at the launch ceremony, at an event held in the city.

A model was handed to a pre-booked customer on the occasion.

Special offer on laptops and desktops

As part of the Aadi month celebrations, HiLaptop.com has come up with a limited-time offer.

Customers can purchase one laptop and receive another one free, with prices starting at just ₹4,999, said a release. The offer features up to 70% off on select models of laptops and desktops.

Every purchase under this offer includes a complimentary laptop bag, USB keyboard, wireless mouse, top guard, scratch guard, screen guard, and key guard, added the release. For details, call 044-42310000, 76543 21064.

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In this neighbourhood in Perumbakkam, vacant plots are anything but vacant — they display Nature's power to regenerate itself

PRINCE FREDERICK

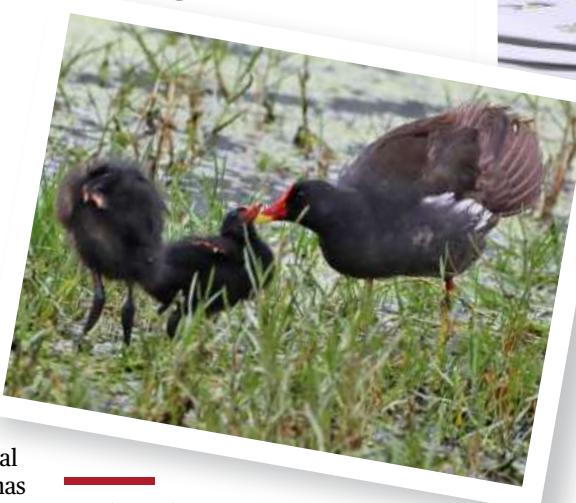
In Indira Priyadarshini Nagar which adjoins both sides of the road leading to Global Hospitals, layouts are dotted as with vacant plots as much as buildings. The buildings display the signs of human civilisation, and the vacant plots bear the insignia of Nature. Walk down any of those cross streets and you would come up avian families.

The species to be found are the purple moorhen, bronze-winged jacana, white-breasted waterhen, pheasant-tailed jacana (in rare patches) and the common moorhen.

Currently, in a boggy vacant

land at the end of Sixth Cross Street, one will come upon a young family of Common moorhens. After dusk one might miss much of the family — the young members of the family — as they can blend effortlessly into the enveloping darkness.

With downy black feathers, Moorhen chicks look aerial and even when the camera has captured their frames in sharp focus, they could look pixelated. They inhabit the unreal from the get-go, arriving firm-footed even as they crackle out of the eggs. And these little ones sure know how to run for cover. At the slightest intimation of any intrusive presence,



In these boggy, water-filled patches, besides bulrushes, there is enough duckweed and other floating vegetation that turn the digestive juices within these birds



Common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) chicks with a parent at a vacant plot filled with water and floating vegetation at Indira Priyadarshini Nagar in Perumbakkam on July 25, 2025.
PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

they sprint to their parents' protective side with a speed that suggests fairy dust has been sprinkled on them.

In these boggy, water-filled patches, besides bulrushes, there is enough duckweed and other floating vegetation that turn the digestive juices within these birds. Among the characteristics of the common moorhen is how the parents deign to feed

the chicks till they feel a sense of surfeit. This is interesting as the chicks are known to be gregarious feeders and precocious enough to fend for themselves. Recently, when this writer had a look-in at this patch, a parent was being extremely doting: it was allopreening three of the chicks, one after the other. It was quite a packed family with eight chicks around to be counted. The other parent was missing from the scene. Both parents share the responsibility of raising the young.