

IT CORRIDOR

Adyar » Kanathur » Kelambakkam » Navalur » Semmencherry » Thoraipakkam » Velachery » IIT Madras » Kandanchavadi » Kottivakkam

Neelankarai » Sholinganallur » Thiruvannamiyur » Vijaya Nagar » Indira Nagar » Karapakkam » Kotturpuram » Padur » Thalambur » Pallikaralai

A trash point on OMR

In Navalur, on the arterial road, close to where the toll plaza once stood, piles of garbage stare motorists and pedestrians in the face



Garbage being dumped with impunity along a patch of OMR in Navalur as these images from June 27, 2025 show. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In a distance, the towers of House of Hiranandani Upscale pierce the skies. The emerging pillars of CMRL's Red Line strive to outdo those towers, shooting for the skies. The latter manages the illusion of greater height, being closer to the camera. One knows who is winning.

Though one-sided, this contest is engrossing until one hits the section where the old Navalur toll plaza stood.

Another contest, impersonal, but equally spirited and just as one-sided, deflects attention from the towers and CMRL pillars. Garbage seeks to take over the sidewalk; and latter hardly launches a fightback, silently taking the blows. On the part of the garbage, it is a case of incremental improvement, garbage accumulating over a span of time and reaching a point where it cannot be ignored. Down your eyelids and seek to shut out the scene, but it gets to you through the nostrils. The accumulation is

so consistent that it has become ragpickers' stomping ground. In one of the images, one of them is seen looking for things he can thrust into the slot machine of circular economy and earn his livelihood. Though not captured in these images: in the corners, a herd of bovines were recumbent and chewing the cud, raising multiple fears. Stray cattle scuttering across the road and causing accidents. The stray cattle ingesting plastic to their harm and so on. The local authorities need to address this issue.



'Address the issue of congestion on this street in Kasturba Nagar'

SRINIVASAN LAKSHMANAN

Providing a link to many areas (which include Indira Nagar, LB Road, Madhya Kailash and OMR), Second Cross Street at Kasturba Nagar in Adyar is extremely busy. And it is congested, especially during peak hours, due to factors such as encroachments, parked vehicles and of course the high volume of traffic.

People visiting certain shops on Second Cross Street exacerbate the problem by park their two-wheelers all over the pavement and the main road. Pedestrians are left with no space to walk.

Greater Chennai Corporation and the Greater Chennai Traffic Police should address this issue.

Srinivasan Lakshmanan is a resident of Adyar

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Scope for charity on Padur Bypass Road

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

With this wide thoroughfare constructed by TNRDC now fully operational, those taking it regularly would do well to carry things they want to give away. They can deposit them on the shelves at this facility, established by a non-profit and the Padur panchayat

A cursory look might cause one to mistake this facility for a trillion things it is not. Taking in its GISS, one can get it terribly wrong. It has the shape and size of a bus shelter and entertaining commuters is not its mandate. In the morning hours, workers tend to congregate at this facility, being seated on its steps as they wait for trucks to take them to work sites. And it is not a designated shelter: it does offer shelter to those needing to cool their heels before their awaited wheels arrive, but that is not its primary mission. Located at the beginning of the Padur-Thaiyur bypass road and standing alongside the Padur panchayat office,



this facility invites people to leave behind eatables and clothes for the underprivileged, and also take sanitary napkins from a dispenser. Called "Anbukudil Helping Hands Center", it has been established by Matrathai Nokki Charitable Trust with the support of Padur Panchayat Council. According to a habitue of that area, one who is familiar with the initiative, the panchayat is interested in the effort on a daily basis, keeping an eye on it.

With the bypass road now fully being completed and made operational in its entirety, many wheels would roll down, and those hitting the road would help the cause of charity if they carried with them eatables and clothes they would not mind giving away. There is a fridge to place food items in and two shelves to place clothes and any other items that that the donor might want to give away.

The facility also comes with a sanitary napkin dispenser.

A helpline has been displayed at the facility for anyone looking for guidance on how they could help the needy. It is 73583 36011.



The community fridge and shelves at Padur Bypass Road on June 27, 2025.
PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

'Ply the buses through Hospital junction'

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Commuters want MTC buses to halt at the stop near the Kamakshi Hospital junction in Pallikaranai.

On the lane towards Velachery, route numbers 51 (Velachery-Tambaram (West)), 51A (T. Nagar - Tambaram (East)), 51AX (T. Nagar-Kilambakkam), 51B (Saidapet-Karanai), A51 (Broadway-Tambaram (West)) and M51V (T. Nagar - Mambakkam Kolathur) should pass through the stop, but they avoid it and take a short



detour.

"Months ago, the Tambaram City Police introduced traffic changes on Pallavaram - Thoraipakkam 200-Foot Radial Road and Velachery Main Road to ease traffic congestion at the intersection," says P. Vijaya Prabhakaran, a commuter.

The drivers should halt at the Hospital haltover. However, the buses go on the Pallikaranai flyover, forcing commuters to wait for V51 (T. Nagar-Tambaram (West)) and 91R (Velachery-Kilambakkam). No announcements are displayed at the stop advising commuters to board buses at Narayanapuram.

The V51 service shows up due to Metro Rail work on Medavakkam Main Road.

'Solve for Tomorrow' challenge

June 30 is the final day to apply for Samsung 'Solve for Tomorrow', a national innovation competition for those in the 14 to 22 age group. The programme empowers students with design thinking tools, mentorship from Samsung and IIT Delhi experts, investor connects, prototyping support, and a chance to win ₹ 1 crore, said a press release. Solve for Tomorrow is not about being a genius coder or a tech expert - it is about empathy, curiosity, and the courage to try. It is for students who dream of a cleaner city, safer roads, healthier communities, and a future where no voice is left unheard, said the release.



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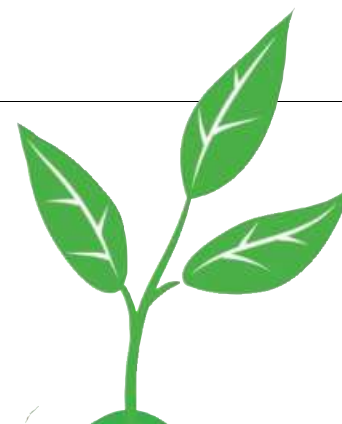
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Stock exchange with a difference



At its massive annual gathering, Chennai Maadi Thotta Kootam enables an exchange of native seeds of vegetables among its members, and also gives them away to anyone outside the fold who would care to ask for them. The only precondition is that they use the seeds, not waste them. It also courier seeds to those removed in geography. Everything is done *pro bono*. And that begets the question: what is this group all about?

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

When the pandemic had people cooped up in their homes imposing debilitating restrictions on their routine and movement, the terrace was “discovered”. The top deck became well-hoofed, residents becoming alive to its potential. Little wonder then that a terrace gardening group in Chennai that was seeded before the pandemic truly germinated in 2021, becoming a full-fledged community. Maintaining that momentum over the last four years, Chennai Maadi Thotta Kootam, as this group is called, has risen several levels to accommodate 500 terraces (read “over 500 members”). Terraces outside the fold also benefitting from this group’s programmes, the number should actually be pegged much higher than that.

In organisational parlance, seven members would be the equivalent of charter members, having cranked the initiative and push-started it when it showed signs of stalling. They are spread across Chennai, in fact the Chennai Metropolitan Area: Bhuvaneshwari is from Anna Nagar; Rama from St. Thomas Mount; Sujo Jones from Tambaram; Mohan also from Tambaram; Logamary from Kodambakkam; Uma from Saidapet; and Rajesh from Thiruvallur. There are other early members, but these are counted among those members that have continued to keep this informal, largely WhatsApp-centric and rarely offline group together.

Mohan, one of the founders, clarifies that this group is far from being an organisation, and defines it as a loosely structured but tightly knit network of terrace gardeners. Chennai Maadi Thotta Kootam has no formal hierarchy, office or funding. It thrives on shared commitment, a shared interest in sustainable, fertiliser-free gardening. Seeds are packed at dining tables. Deliveries are arranged in group chats. Advice is traded with the air of informality and bonhomie one would expect among friends.

A salient feature of this group that has remained prominent to this day is exchange of traditional seeds



From an earlier event. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

among members. The batches of seeds the group collects come into sharp focus at one grand annual gathering.

Every year, ahead of the Tamil month of Aadi (mid-July to mid-August), which marks the sowing season, the group organises a massive Saturday Seed Exchange Meet.

At the time of this article going to print, a meet of this proportion and significance was being organised at Anna Nagar Tower Park.

Unlike typical markets or agricultural expos, these events are entirely non-commercial. Seeds are not bought or sold – they are freely given, with trust as the only currency.

“We pack around 500 packets for each variety and hand them out to whoever is interested,” Mohan says. “There is no cost involved. The only expectation is that the seeds are used, not wasted.”

The event typically features more than 30 types of native, non-hybrid seeds of vegetables – including brinjals, tomatoes, lady’s finger, snake gourd, cluster beans and compact varieties of bottle gourd – are ideal

for urban terraces. These are carefully sorted into ziplock bags and handed over to anyone willing to try their hand at gardening.

Attendees share the origin stories of the seeds, and discuss what worked and did not in their soil. For those unable to attend the meet, the group arranges for the seeds to be couriered to them, ensuring that the cycle of growth and sharing continues uninterrupted. In some weeks, more than 200 such couriers are sent out, says Murugan.

Wider impact

These meet-ups bring seeds and voices from across India on one platform. Renowned seed savers and farming advocates are invited as guest speakers. Sundar from Pondicherry, a visual communication graduate turned traditional seed conservator, is a regular presence. Over the last decade, he has travelled across Tamil Nadu collecting and documenting over 200 types of vegetable seeds, including 50 varieties of tomatoes and nearly 30 types of brinjals.

“Out of just three sorakais, I can get 150 seeds,” Sundar says. “I give a few to others, and if they grow them, the cycle continues. It is not just agriculture – it is a form of trust-building.”

Joining him this year at the meet at Anna Nagar Tower Park are Appa Rao, a national award-winning seed conservator from Andhra Pradesh, and Pambayan, an advocate of pesticide-free gardening. Together, they promote inter-state seed exchange—Tamil Nadu’s native yam seeds are shared with Appa Rao, who in return brings hardy Andhra varieties to the city. It is an example of grassroots biodiversity cutting across state borders.

Digital gardening

A WhatsApp group is the glue keeping these terrace gardeners together. Have you ever come across pest control techniques and potting mix ratios being hurriedly spat out into voice messages? In this group, you will on a daily basis, sometimes on an hourly basis. Members regularly post photos of wilting leaves or insect sightings, asking for quick advice – and receiving responses often within minutes. Chennai Maadi Thottam Kootam is largely women-led, with 90% of members identifying as female. For many, terrace gardening has become more than a hobby; it is a way to reconnect with nature, manage kitchen waste, and introduce children to the rhythms of growth and seasonality.

A larger goal

Sundar’s philosophy resonates deeply with the group. Since 2015, he has been working to revive traditional farming practices through awareness, seed sharing and documentation. His goal is to build a community seed bank that functions independently of commercial seed markets or government schemes. He also hopes to compile his knowledge into a book for future generations. “There is still hesitation among beginners,” he says. “People do not believe these small seeds will really work. So I show them videos of my own farm, and when they see 200 chillies growing from native varieties, they start to believe.”

Culvert work moves to other side of the road

Near Adyar creek, DGS Dinakaran Salai was “shaved off” around the edges on the western side, resulting in a reduced carriageway. For weeks (quite a number of weeks), during rush hour, vehicles squeezed through this section, the drivers hoping these machines had the boneless flexibility of an octopus.

The work (which is ongoing) pertains to replacement of the old culvert, one of brick-and-mortar variety, with a modern, concrete culvert. The old culvert, harking back to a considerably old time zone, being narrow was not enabling optimal water flow, a failing that would prove debilitating during floods when it would have to deal with a greater

volume of water rushing in noticeably.

The culvert work is being carried out by Greater Chennai Corporation.

The work has now made further inroads, having moved on to the other side. Even on the side it has been completed, there is still some more of the work to be finished. Now traffic moving both ways do so around the completed section of the culvert, which has been barricaded. Around the work site, the wall along the Adyar Creek had been removed, and a row of metal barricade covered with UV green cloth has been erected. On the barricades, defined by UV green cloth, strips of red LED lights have been run so that motorists

do not run into them at night.

Contrary to what was expected when the new traffic movement was put in place, there is no significant logjams except during times when the vehicle volume in overwhelmingly high.

The new traffic arrangement on this section, as seen on June 24 and 25, 2025. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

‘Choose core engineering over computer science’

Modern Senior Secondary School in Nanganallur recently celebrated ‘Student Mentorship Day’ at the school campus.

V. Kamakotti, director of IIT Madras, was the chief guest.

Addressing class XII science students, the director began with an engaging session on the elegance of numbers, urging students to approach Mathematics with curiosity, not fear.

The academician stressed the importance of higher order thinking skills in building a strong academic foundation.

He encouraged students to prioritise core engineering disciplines like mechanical, Electrical, civil, and biological sciences over computer science.

“These fields are critical to nation-building and technological progress. Core engineering is not a career but a commitment to the nation.”



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Date: 27 June 2025

**SUBJECT: CLARIFICATION REGARDING ALUMNI
EVENT MENTIONED IN MEDIA**

The Management of **St. John's English School & Junior College, Besant Nagar** wishes to issue a clarification concerning the article titled “St. John's Besant Nagar calls alumni for annual meet” published in The Hindu Down Town, 15th June 2025 and Adyar Times 22nd June 2025 Events column.

While we deeply value and cherish our alumni community and the lasting relationships they continue to foster, we would like to gently clarify that the event referenced in the article The Hindu Down Town, 15th June 2025 and Adyar Times 22nd June 2025 Events column has been independently organized. The school including the Management, Staff & Students has not played a role in the planning, coordination, or execution of this particular gathering.

Any mentions of the institution's management, faculty, or students in relation to this event may have arisen from informal connections and do not reflect the official stance of the school. As such, we kindly clarify that the school holds no liability or obligation in connection with the event or its proceedings.

We remain committed to fostering strong alumni relations through officially endorsed initiatives and will continue to support meaningful engagement under the guidance of the school's management.

Management

 **St. John's English School & Junior College**
Besant Nagar, Chennai – 600 090.

Making cakes look as good as they taste

Speech- and hearing-impaired R. Sathish Kumar can make cakes look as good as they taste. The

48-year-old is a professional cake artist.

His son U.S. Niraj remembers how Sathish made one of his birthdays memorable by designing a cake in the form of a racing car track.

"People usually draw and show what design they need in the cake or bring photos, and he gets it perfect most of the time," says Niraj.

Sathish began his career working in a bakery where he picked up the skill to decorate cakes with fondants and other decorative features. A skilled artist, Sathish now takes classes in cake decoration for those with disabilities as well as able-bodied individuals at Cheshire Homes in

Coimbatore. He is a regular to most cake decoration competitions and has many victories to his credit. The medals from these competitions are displayed at his home. Besides creativity, one needs steady hands and precision to shine in this field, he says.



Participants from various editions of Abilympics. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Greeting the world with a resilient heart

Swetha Kulkarni has been dabbling in painting since her school days, having been motivated by the encouragement provided by her teachers.

"It was Vijaya Lakshmi ma'am who taught me to design greeting cards and do many other crafts. She took me to many competitions as well," says Swetha, who is hearing-impaired.

Her disability has not been a deterrent to pursuing excellence. She went on to study BE Computer Science at a college in Davangere. Now, she works with a leading software company in Chennai as business process lead. "During weekends I make it a point to sketch or draw and it helps me de-stress," says Swetha, showing the many greeting cards she has designed.

From YouTube she has been picking up new techniques in art and also does photography.



From Chennai to Helsinki

An event aimed at shortlisting participants for Abilympics 2027 in Finland was conducted at IIT-Madras recently. *The Hindu Downtown* spoke to some of the winners at the event, which went under the title South Zone Regional Abilympics 2025

Weekends are for wellness

While he was between jobs, Parul Agrawal stumbled upon a diploma programme in spa therapy. He took it up. "It was a six-month programme. There was some pessimism, initially, when I considered the job prospects of this course. Now I am glad I am able to juggle work as an HR professional during weekdays and that of a massage therapist at a wellness centre during weekends," says Parul, who is visually-challenged.

He is happy winning gold at the South Zone Regional Abilympics 2025 and is looking forward to bigger platforms where he can showcase his skills. "Visually impaired people can provide excellent massage therapy services because our sense of touch amounts to a big advantage," says Parul. His employer is happy that like other able-bodied employees in the wellness centre he is able to take up tasks such as foot reflexology and massages.

Heard of Abilympics? Here is the lowdown on it

LIFFY THOMAS

Fifteen new vocational skills will be showcased in the form of contests at the 11th International Abilympics scheduled to be held in Finland in 2027.

According to Dr. Jitender Aggarwal, secretary-general of National Abilympic Association of India (NAAI), these additional categories at Abilympics are aimed at increasing the number of participants. Abilympics is organised for those with disabilities.

Before starting Sarthak Educa-

tional Trust in 2004, Dr Aggarwal was a dental surgeon; he continued as one until he lost his vision due to macular degeneration.

**Of the 40 plus categories in vocational skills, 15 are being introduced for the first time. How and why is this important?*

Newly-introduced categories (also called "trades") include Baking, Hairdressing, Fashion Technology, Hotel Reception, Child-care and Massage Therapy. These additions reflect emerging employment opportunities for the disabled community.

International Abilympics is

held once in four years where participants compete in 45 trades. India is also one of the members of the governing body and I am an executive member in it, where we brainstorm about new skills to be added and the ones that can be omitted. We prescribe skills that are mentioned in the IAF charter.

**India hosted International Abilympics for the first time in 2003 in New Delhi. How has Abilympics or "Olympics of Abilities" evolved since then?*

The National Abilympic Association was formed in 2001 so that

India could host the 2003 edition, where we had 1500 participants and 40 countries competing. In 2016, NAAI was handed over to Sarthak Educational Trust and we revived it. Besides tapping into talents among those with disabilities, we also need to support them by identifying expert coaches, offering infrastructure and equipment to help them compete at the international stage.

The 2023 Abilympics in France was our first major outing where we noticed that the talent pool from Japan, France, South Korea and China were highly competi-

tive. We learnt a lot from them. We are making Abilympics also professional like Olympics and Paralympics.

**What are the expectations for Indians from Abilympics 2027?*

In 2023, we returned with seven medals. This year, our target is 30. We have faculty from IITs and other premier institutions to train and guide our participants, both physically and emotionally. We want more persons with disabilities to showcase their vocational skills. We are planning to have a wild card category next time.

New police booth at Marina Loop Road

▼ To enhance safety on the section of Marina beach along Loop Road, a police booth has been established. Attached to the E1 Mylapore station, the booth sports four CCTV camera units focussed on four sections, and the surveillance mechanism is marked by live monitoring within the booth. The booth is called Loop Road Service Centre, and has the beach sands with beach goers on one side and the new, modern fish market on the other side.
Photo: Prince Frederick



Most of the **GCC kiosks sit idle on Besant Nagar Second Avenue**

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Besant Nagar Second Avenue makes a forceful illustration of Falkland's law: in the light of what transpired after vendor kiosks were parked on the pavement, the decision to do so seems unnecessary, at best premature.

The revenue department of Greater Chennai Corporation allocated these kiosks (which are carry-overs from a still-born exercise in Marina) to vendors. And a good many of them did look the gift horse in the mouth.

Considerable time elapsed between the parking of these kiosks and their allocation, and during that period, the kiosks were treated to cosmetic improvements.

As things stand, a majority of vendors have shied away from using these kiosks. A couple of those who started conducting business out of the kiosks have abandoned them.

The net result is that the pavement has these kiosks as well as some of the old vending carts and shops vendors were previously operating from. It is the equivalent of a diet plan that went wrong: instead of replacing the old, unhealthy diet, the new diet serves as an addition. By introducing these streamlined kiosks to have the old shops and vending carts replaced, the plan was to get Besant Nagar Second Avenue to slim down. But as things turned out, this pavement on Besant Nagar Second Avenue has become obese from a double diet.

Three day workshop on agricultural export

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute and Tamil Nadu Food Processing & Agri Export Promotion Corporation (TNAPEX) are conducting a training programme on agricultural export from July 9 to 11.

According to a press release, the session will cover mandatory procedures, product quality and testing, packaging and branding, excise clearance, logistics, cold chain management, market research, export finance, and government schemes. Also, exporters in agricultural and processed food sector will share their experiences.

It is a free residential training programme, adds the release.

Workshop on baking

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute is conducting a workshop on baking on June 30 and July 1. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Those above 18 years of age with a minimum educational qualifica-



tion of Class 10 may apply. According to a press release, the session will focus on brownies made from dry fruits, millets, and the ones with eggs and eggless. Also labelling and marketing aspects of bakery products will be taught.

Both the workshops will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the institute's premises at SIDCO Industrial Estate, EDII Office Road, Guindy. Prior registration is required. For details, call 8668102600.

Training session on Tally Prime on July 3 and 4

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, Department of MSME, is conducting a training programme on the basics of Tally Prime, a business management software used for accounting and inventory management. It will be held on July 3 and 4 at the institute's premises at Parthasarathy Koil Street in Ekkattuthangal. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5.45 p.m. According to a press release, the programme will be useful for entrepreneurs and those aspiring to become one. For details, call 95437 73337 / 93602 21280

Railway increases nine-car EMU rakes to 12

The Chennai Division of the Southern Railway has upgraded all the existing 9-car Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) rakes in the suburban railway network's southwest and northeast lines.

The augmentation was carried out in phases at the EMU Car Shed in Avadi.

The EMU services on these lines: Chennai Beach - Chengalpattu, Chennai Central - Arakonnam and the Gummidipoondi and Sullurpetta sections will have 12 rakes.

The upgrade has resulted in a 21 per cent increase in seating capacity, effectively enabling the division to accommodate an additional four lakh commuters daily, compared to the previous 1.2 million suburban commuters and non-suburban passengers, said a release.

This initiative is expected to substantially reduce commuters and passengers congestion on trains, thereby providing a more convenient, safe, and comfortable commuting experience, particularly during peak hours on the demand corridors, according to a release issued by Southern Railway.

Workshop on Bonsai

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre, Guindy, is conducting a culinary workshop on vermicomposting on July 3. Another workshop on Bonsai art will be held on July 4. Both the sessions will be held at the centre's premises at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044-29530048.

Free travel for freedom fighters extended

The Arasu Bus has announced an extension of its existing free travel passes until September 30 for persons with disabilities, freedom fighters, and senior Tamil scholars. The Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA) is developing a new software to extend this online application facility to all transport corporations in the state, said a release.

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PRINCE FREDERICK

The evening is visibly worn out. And the opportune night is poised to tear into it with fangs of darkness and gobble it. The crowd has thinned out on Besant Nagar Second Avenue.

The lights have gone out in the shops except for food outlets given to entertaining customers and orders well into the evening. About fifteen minutes to eleven, a staff from Jonah's Bistro steps out with packed food and hands it to a food delivery partner who would not budge from his two-wheeler. He could not budge from it. Attached to Zomato, Lakshmanan Angamuthu is differently abled, a locomotor disorder making him dependent on a specially designed three-wheeler for movement. Unlike other delivery partners, he cannot sweep into the restaurant and pick up the order to be delivered. Unlike other delivery partners, he cannot step off his bike, ring the bell and deliver that order at the customers' doorsteps.

Lakshmanan notes that the delivery details would contain a reference to his condition so that customers are ready for it and step out to collect the order. But if they had missed that detail that came up on the screen, Lakshmanan would enlighten them about it over a call.

Unlike other delivery partners, he does not muscle his way through traffic, moving at a clip. He cannot. Being low-powered, his vehicle is hugely limited in speed. One could see that for oneself, after the conversation outside Jonah's Bistro on Besant Nagar Second Avenue, when Lakshmanan rolled into Tiger Varadhachari Road and then Beach Road, and the vehicle was taking him to his destination at a leisurely pace.

Saidapet resident Lakshmanan Angamuthu represents a small but significant group of food delivery partners whose day is powered by a specially designed vehicle, resilience and a soupcon of understanding from customers

The food delivery partner on three wheels

Lakshmanan has been a food delivery partner for two years, and he enjoys being on the road moving from point A to point B. For, when asked if he would prefer a more settled work day, one that enables him to stretch his heels under a desk, and dig his feet into one address and not waltz from one address to another, the 33-year-old's answer is a 'no' that comes right off the bat without a hint of hesitation.

"I am enjoying this job for now; I like to roam around and this job is all about moving around the city." He works eight hours every day.

Lakshmanan is a resident of Saidapet, and this work would have familiarised him with a multitude of roads around Chennai.

As one treats him as a *rara avis*, Lakshmanan notes that there are other delivery partners with locomotor disorders dependent on such a vehicle and the understanding of customers. He also points out that Zomato makes these vehicles available to such delivery partners through a partnership with customised mobility solutions provider NeoMotion.



Lakshmanan Angamuthu at Besant Nagar Second Avenue on June 27, 2025.
PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

Head constable with Shastri Nagar police station K. Madhan Kumar has donated blood a whopping 92 times

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A young recruit at the Tamil Nadu Special Police battalion, K. Madhan Kumar first donated blood when he was in his early 20s. A colleague's relative was in need of blood and Madhan volunteered. "When I returned to resume my work I was told to take two days' rest on account of the blood donation. It



Going the extra mile

surprised me because we rarely get to go home otherwise," recalls Madhan.

Since then Madhan, who is currently posted as head constable at Shastri Nagar police station in Adyar, has made blood dona-

tion a habit. "My dad, who was also an active donor, encouraged me to donate blood for the benefit of individuals who are in utmost need of it," says Madhan, adding that he resumes work immediately after donating

K. Madhan Kumar

blood. Over the last five to six years, in addition to blood donation, Madhan has been donating plasma and platelets.

He has made these donations 92 times, with blood donation accounting for 60 of them. Voluntary Health Services in Taramani is where he has donated platelets the maximum number of times to help children undergoing treatment for cancer.

As admin of seven police groups, Madhan plays a crucial role in verifying and circulating messages on "blood needed" among his circles.

"I have a simple form that I ask people to fill to make communication easier. I also make it a point to make the donation near

my place of work or my home," says this resident of Maduravoyal.

Madhan also engages actively with other social initiatives such as "Udhavam Karangal 2003".

"Whenever a colleague dies we pool in money to get an insurance cover for the family. This was started by the 2003 batch of the Tamil Nadu police and has now extended to other batches as well. Two years ago, *Vikatan* gave us an award for this work," he says.

"Kings of West Traffic" is another initiative running since June 2014 where Madhan along with other police personnel do charity work such as paying fees for underprivileged children, contributing to the families of deceased police personnel, supporting families affected by cyclones, helping auto drivers during the pandemic, and funding treatment for police personnel and their families.