

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



OLD AND WISE

While addressing the emptiness in their own lives, two residents of Adyar, Jayanthi Sekhar and Pushya Sitaraman, have managed to ease the loneliness of many senior citizens who find themselves in a similar situation **P5**



FEELING THE PULSE OF A STREET AND A NEIGHBOURHOOD

An open house on March 21, 22 and 23 that is being organised as part of an initiative titled The Pelathope Urban Living Lab will explore the questions of social cohesion and meaningful development in neighbourhoods **P6**

Cycling

is just what this doctor ordered

LIFFY THOMAS

If you happen to see a bicycle with a board in Tamil on it that offers a pitch for cycling as “a cheap and an effective medicine”, then the cyclist is likely from a clinic in Old Pallavaram. The founder of BHS Geriatrics and Diabetes Centre in Old Pallavaram, Dr. B. Hari Shankar encourages his staff and patients to take up cycling to beat lifestyle diseases. He practises what he preaches.

“My staff and patients would have never seen me in a car or motorcycle as I cycle to the clinic every day from my home in Nanganallur, a distance of around eight kilometres,” says Dr. Hari Shankar, who has been running this clinic in Old Pallavaram (as well as one in Keelkattalai) for the last 14 years.

In the morning, on his way to the clinic, he often drops his daughter at her school in Keelkattalai.

In fact, Hari Shankar started cycling inspired by the words of a patient's son-in-law who had a stint in Japan where cycling is common.

To encourage his staff to bicycle to work, the management offers a monthly travel allowance of ₹1000. Besides, it covers expense incurred in maintaining the bicycle such as changing the tyres and any other unexpected repairs. “Employees have to produce the bill to get the amount,” says the geriatric physician who is a graduate of Chengalpattu Medical College.

Employees not keen on vesting in this eco-friendly mode need not bother as the centre has a ready pool of bicycles - more than 20 cycles ready to hit the road. These were bought gradually over the months. “Many are gently used cycles that we got repaired to the point that they look new,” he says.

Time taken to cycle on the busy roads is often a deterrent to switch entirely to this green mode of transport.



and vegetables are served half cooked. We get wood from carpenters and from households that are planning to discard them,” he says.

The centre has 50 full-time employees on its rolls and does not like to impose anything on patients and staff.

Like a few of the young female nurses found it odd to cycle with the board so it was removed for them. “One size approach does not suit all,” adds the doctor.



Dr Hari Shankar cycles to work every day.

Nurse S. Banu is one of them. For the last two years, she has been availing the ₹1000 allowance every month. She cycles close to 10 km from her home in Velachery to the centre in Old Pallavaram, and swears that cycling has been an effective way to lose weight.

Social health worker P. Radhakrishnan, who had a history of health issues, is another inspiration. His cycling habit and work at the centre which involves cutting wood ensures him a good night's sleep. A nurse who comes from Nanganallur is also a diehard cyclist.

Recently, a patient at the centre sought a bicycle and found his request met. Dr. Hari Shankar says he tells his patients and senior citizens that running, cycling and walking are effective ways to beat lifestyle diseases such as obesity, diabetes, sleep apnea, hypertension and cardiovascular diseases.

“Generally an invention brings solution for one and problem for the other, so we have adopted several practices on a trial and error basis. Like food at the centre is cooked on firewood

“My staff and patients would have never seen me in a car or motorcycle as I cycle to the clinic every day from my home in Nanganallur, a distance of around eight kilometres,”



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Chitlapakkam

Fencing comes up on Karanai Main Road to prevent littering in a lake and a water channel



The section of Karanai Main Road where a lake and a couple of gated communities -- Bollineni Renata and Jones Cassia -- are located was the target of rampant dumping of trash, including construction debris. To put an end to this practice, the Chengalpattu district administration has got EFI to build a fencing, covering the length of two water systems (the afore-mentioned lake and a water channel, the latter under WRD's watch). The images were taken on March 4, 2025. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

Do not ignore our roads, say Chromepet residents

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Residents of Arkeeswarar Colony in Chromepet are demanding that the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation complete relaying the roads they have ignored.

These roads are Arkeeswarar Colony Main Road, First Street, Second Street, Third Street, Fourth Street, Fifth Street, Sixth Street, and Sixth Cross Street.

In 2024, the Pammal Zone of the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation dug up these roads to construct an underground sewer network, which was completed in September.

The civic body relaid all the stretches except Fifth Street, Sixth Cross Street and the Main Road in the Colony, giving motorists a tough time.

"The roads are unfit for motor-ing. During rains, it is even worse as it turns slushy and slippery.



Arkeeswarar Colony Main Road in Chromepet. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

When residents raised the issue with the authorities in the Zone they replied that the stretches would be relaid in November. But due to the rains in November, the mending exercise could be taken only in January," says S. Vasanthi, a resident.

Residents have sent petitions and even raised the issue with the

Tambaram City Municipal Corporation Commissioner, elected representatives, and the Chengalpattu District Collectorate.

The residents have also requested the officials to complete the remaining road laying work on a small section of First and Second Street.

Text: T.S. Atul Swaminathan

'Chitlapakkam lake is more inviting now'



If Chitlapakkam Lake looks clean, credit goes to the residents who cleaned the lake and the revetment walls of trash, vegetation and water hyacinths from February 16 to 25.

C. Rajendran, a long-time Chitlapakkam resident who spear-headed the drive, said steel coracle boats and mechanical equipment were used for the exercise.

"We plan to conduct more such drives and invite residents to join us to keep the lake clean," says Rajendran. Fruit-bearing tree saplings were planted in the garden along the walker's pathway and on the islands.

Residents take out a rally to save lake in Nemilichery

Recently, residents of Chromepet and adjoining regions took out a rally in Nemilichery and Hasthinapuram urging the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation to weed water hyacinths and cut Seemai Karuvellam trees from Nemilichery Eri.

The public rallied around the lake, holding placards and shouting slogans. They urged the Corporation to install an underground drainage system network and prevent sewage inflow.

V. Santhanam, founder of People's Awareness Association, a citizen's forum, said, "In 2021, the lake was a dumpyard with 3,000 tonnes of trash. We removed the garbage, weeded the water hyacinths, and deepened

the lake to a height of 20 feet."

Though the restoration exercise has resulted in maintaining the groundwater level, the Water Resources Department (WRD) should have maintained the lake.

Initially spread over 49 acres, today the lake has shrunk considerably. According to Santhanam, Corporation has submitted a Detailed Project Report (DPR) to the State Government.

The Corporation and the WRD should plug illegal sewer inlets, weed water hyacinths, deepen and de-silt the lake to a height of 30 feet, and construct compound walls to protect the lake. The WRD should maintain the lake after the restoration exercise.



‘Crematorium at Balaji Avenue is neglected’



A crematorium is a place of reverence where the deceased are respectfully prepared for their final journey. But the situation at the gasifier crematorium at Balaji Avenue in Chitlapakkam does not make a pleasant sight.

Garbage and green waste are dumped in the crematorium. Last year, during the North East Monsoon rains, heavy winds blew, causing the uprooting of trees and branches, and these found a place in the crematorium, and thereafter dumping continued.

The garbage has almost occupied the entire space around the building where the deceased are cremated.

The dry tree branches and its leaves could catch fire. The overflow of grey water is also seen. The stink emanates from these

wastes.

Snakes are seen, and the terrible bitter mosquitoes make invasions into the houses nearby.

Tambaram City Municipal Corporation must issue a directive to remove all wastes immediately from the crematorium and stop further dumping.

The authorities concerned should plant more trees inside this crematorium and provide all required facilities in this respectful place.

P. Viswanathan
Chitlapakkam

Tree waste dumped at the crematorium in Balaji Avenue, Chitlapakkam.

PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



‘Soil dumped in canal’



On Ranga Nagar Third Cross Street and Fifth Street in Thiruneermalai unknown individuals have dumped soil in ‘Nattu Kalvai,’ a canal carrying excess water from the Thiruneermalai Eri to Adyar River.

As a result, the canal’s width, which was 15 feet, has been reduced by one-and-a-half and two feet.

The canal is maintained by Water Resources Department.

As there is no underground drainage in the region, even after being merged with the Corporation four years ago, residents discharge sewage into the canal.

The Water Resources Department authorities should visit the spot. The civic body should take action to implement an underground drainage system.

B. Saravanan
Thiruneermalai

‘Comply with HC directive’



The Agaramthen Lake inlet channel is overrun with garbage, which is set on fire. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Agaramthen Village Panchayat and Saint Thomas Mount Panchayat Union should strictly follow the Madras High Court directive regarding the dumping of garbage in a lake inlet channel at Puthur.

The channel is located below Vengambakkam Road towards Nallambakkam.

For years, the village panchayat has been dumping garbage along

the inlet channel of Agaramthen Lake, blocking water flow during monsoon and setting it on fire, posing a health hazard to many families in Kaspapuram and Puthur regions.

Agaramthen Lake receives excess water from Puthur Thangal Eri. Last year, Madras HC issued a directive to the Panchayat to identify a place to dispose of the garbage.

The order added that the dumpyard should be permanently removed and the area cleaned on a periodical basis.

Though a parcel of land has been identified nearby, it is yet to be shifted.

I have submitted many petitions to the Block Development Officer of the Union.

S. Srinivasan
Puthur

New digital boards at Tambaram railway station



The Southern Railway has installed a digital information board (displaying information on arrival and departure of trains) near the ticket counter at the eastern entrance of Tambaram station. It has now become convenient for commuters. Text and photo by RV Baskaran from Selaiyur

‘Toilets remain closed in these railway stations’

The toilets at the following railway stations are closed most of the days: St. Thomas Mount, Guindy, Saidapet Mambalam, Kodambakkam, Nungambakkam, Chetpet, and Egmore. It should be noted that sub-urban train services is an important mode of public transport for Chennai residents. But basic facilities are lacking at these stations.

S. Balamurugan
Alandur



Rowing down the Adyar river for five decades

Five former employees of Parry & Co. recall the time when they were part of a title-winning team



(From left) Revi Thomas, Rabindranath Rao, S. Radhakrishnan, Naresh Vassudhev and P Venkatram have served on the managing committee of Madras Boat Club in different capacities over the years.



The Parry & Co. team that won the Challenge Fours Trophy in 1975: (L to R) Rabindranath Rao, Revi C Thomas (Bow), K. R. Ganapathy (Coxswain): S. Radhakrishnan (stroke) and H. T. Bhaskar Rao.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

K. KEERTHIVASAN

In the mornings, around 6 a.m., both on weekdays and weekends, one can spot a small group of men who are in their 70s, rowing down the Adyar river, cracking jokes as they go.

They are no ordinary folks. The five rowers, Revi Thomas, Rabindranath Rao, S. Radhakrishnan, Naresh Vassudhev and P. Venkatram, all former employees of Parry & Co., who won medals at major regatta events in the 70s and early 80s, are still at it, waking up early in the morning, going to Madras Boat Club and rowing with all the joy that the sport brings. Naresh and Revi, who rowed for MBC, were honoured with the

prestigious Club Colours.

In fact, Parry & Co. won the Challenge Fours Trophy, a main event in the prestigious Merchants and Bankers Trophy, for two consecutive years in 1974 and 1975. Barring a few, members of that winning team are still maintaining a link with rowing.

S. Radhakrishnan, part of Parry



When we won the tournament in 1974 after 17 years, our managing director invited us to the boardroom and the victory was celebrated

team that won the Challenge Fours Trophy, says it feels great to be part of the sport for 50 long years and still rowing.

“Every morning, we sit together and reminisce about those days, at the Madras Boat Club. Whenever we are in Chennai, we meet and row at MBC. We have been rowing for 50 years now. We are at MBC at 5.30 a.m. and finish our warm-up by 5.45 a.m. and by 6 a.m. we start racing. It is such a good feeling that at 82 I am able to row six kilometres. Of course, the body feels the pain, but it is a pleasurable pain,” laughs Radhakrishnan.

Seventy-six-year-old Rabindranath Rao, who was part of the team that won the Challenge Fours Trophy twice, says winning the titles felt great. “When we won the tournament in 1974 after 17 years, our Managing Director invited us to the boardroom and everyone celebrated. We were thrilled,” Rao recalls.

Rao enjoys the time with his close friends at MBC. “We keep meeting regularly and are close friends. Once you start rowing, you cannot forget your crew so easily. We race for 10 km; there is rigorous training,” he adds.

Thomas is now a member of MBC, as are Radhakrishna Rao and S. Radhakrishnan. The 77-year-old, who was part of the two titles, is supremely active, ready to row at MBC at 5.45 p.m. “It is not that we meet every day, we meet whenever we can. We do row with different members. It feels great to row,” he says.

The senior citizens are not just content rowing, they continue to train young rowers at MBC. “We also love to coach youngsters. It is very satisfying,” says Revi.

Uninterrupted storytelling

Ramya Vasudevan keeps piling up audio stories through a disciplined schedule of recordings

R SAI VENKATESH

Not all heroes wear capes. Not all heroes are known by their faces. Some manifest as disembodied voices. In the wider world, Ramya Vasudevan chooses to be more heard than seen, thanks to an unstinted commitment to producing audio stories in Tamil.

Ramya has narrated over 2,060 stories, and made them heard on platforms such as Spotify. Irrespective of their tone and theme, the stories are bundled together under

one brand identity, “Under The Tree”. This ‘Tree’ grew from a carelessly tossed seed. Back in 2019, Ramya Whats Apped a friend her story narration based on a book she had just finished reading.

“My friend nudged me to narrate summaries of books, blogs or personalities through audios as she found them quite appealing. She created a WhatsApp group and forwarded one of my audios to it. Soon, it branched out to three more groups [this was at a time when only 256 members could be added to one]. And the pandemic happened, after which the number only grew,” recalls Ramya, an Adyar resident.

Until recently, Ramya had to keep the story recording session for the fag end of the day as she was on a private firm’s payroll. Though quitting that job has freed up time, the overall pattern is intact: she still posts her stories in WhatsApp



Ramya Vasudevan

groups and the Spotify channel around 8.30 a.m. On Mondays and Wednesdays, she narrates Tamil short stories; Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, spiritual lessons; Fridays, general short stories; and Saturdays, lessons from any English book of any domain. Besides these,

she condenses books specifically for children, and posts them on her channels.

Today, over 700 episodes of her content have been stored in public and school libraries, including the Anna Centenary Library, the Ashok Nagar Government Library and the Avarampalayam Library in Coimbatore across different parts of the State. Three years ago, with her husband’s help, she launched a website (underthetree.me), compiling her audios.

Under The Tree also holds a story-telling contest for persons of all age groups once a year, and distributes prizes to winners. It also honours persons who have made significant strides in literature at the event. “For these events alone, I go looking for sponsors. If nobody turns up, I spend out of my pocket,” she adds.

“Some of those who listen to me have turned volunteers for Under The Tree,” says Ramya and cites the example of Karpagam, a librarian from Coimbatore, who stumbled upon Ramya and her audios

during the pandemic and would later set out to Chennai to visit her.

“I requested Ramya to hand me her audio collection, and approached several libraries, including the Anna Centenary Library, and got them stored there. Later, I started a group for like-minded librarians, and circulated her audios there, pressing them to store them in their libraries as well. I also shared them with my readers, went to schools, formed a group of teachers, and submitted her audio collections so as to get students to listen to them. At one point, we even met the Chennai Mayor to get the audios installed across schools in the city,” says Karpagam.

For Sridhar, 64, a retired bank official from Chennai, not a day goes by without listening to Ramya. He maintains a database of her work. He says: “The beauty of her work is mainly her short stories. I sometimes wonder how she manages to find time to do this amid her busy schedule. And imagine the reading she has to do to churn out audios!”



During a recent meetup held at a member's house in Mylapore where participants played traditional games; and (below) Pushya Sitaraman (third from left) and Jayanthi Sekhar standing next to her.



Old and wise

While addressing the emptiness in their own lives, two residents of Adyar, Jayanthi Sekhar and Pushya Sitaraman, have managed to ease the loneliness of many senior citizens who find themselves in a similar situation

LIFFY THOMAS

Recently, in an ancestral house in Mylapore, traditional games kept a gathering enthralled. The sight of shells moving across a wooden board revived memories of *pallanguzhi*. There was a game of Seven Stones. Paramapadam and *aadu puli* were among other games that took a motley group of senior citizens down memory lane. Numbering over 20, the group had gathered at the house of a member as part of the monthly activity of Wise Owl Club.

Led by two sisters - Jayanthi Sekhar and Pushya Sitaraman - the activities of the Club are run under the Wise Owl Foundation, a registered body born in October 2023. Wise Owl Club currently has 40 members and is keen on growing bigger.

The forum was started for senior citizens looking for a recreational club that is off the beaten track. The meetups do not have a fixed venue or date - they are held either at a club or a member's house.

The idea to start a recreational club for seniors came up when the sisters themselves were trying to



infuse fresh meaning into their lives.

"Our children are away and there is some emptiness, that is when we thought of starting this club," says 65-year-old Jayanthi, a resident of Adyar, who was helping the family business before starting the Foundation.

The curated workshops try to offer activities that people are really longing to take up or something that they had grown out of but now want to return to.

Book owls, gardening owls, theatre arts owls, creative owls, playful owls, healthy owls and arm-chair travel are the broad themes of these workshops, offered to members as well as non-members.



In the book owls, for instance, participants stitched a story together - each adding a para in what would finally emerge as an audio book.

Nostalgia is a big hook at these workshops. Pushya, a practising lawyer who is in her 70s, recalls how two ladies discovered that they went to the same school and was taught Bharathiya songs by the same teacher during a session to remember the writer and poet.

While experts are brought in for the workshops, in some cases members would volunteer be the resource person.

The cause

Until last year, Wise Owl Club has been conducting two activities a month - one online and the other offline. While the online events are free to attend, the in-person ones levy a nominal fee for workshops as they would entail the purchase of material such as canvas and paint.

The recent one at Mylapore was a free meetup. There were many new faces among the participants.

"If any of our members offers to host a meetup, we encourage it, as that has the potential of bringing a new set of people on board," says

Jayanthi, adding that K.R. Jambunathan and wife Visalakshi were invited as special guides to help participants get their moves right in the games.

The sisters have been trying to pass on the benefits of such recreational activities to an old age home in the city.

"Whatever little we get conducting activities from our paid workshops is used to conduct similar activities at an old age home," says Jayanthi. This year, Pushya says, they want to conduct at least one such workshop every quarter at an old age home



Feeling the pulse of a street and a neighbourhood

An open house on March 21, 22 and 23 that is being organised as part of an initiative titled The Pelathope Urban Living Lab will explore the questions of social cohesion and meaningful development in neighbourhoods



Event Details:

Dates & Timings

March 21 (5 p.m. - 8 p.m.)

March 22 (9 a.m. - 6 p.m.)

March 23 (9 a.m. - 6 p.m.)

Location: New No. 11, Old No. 6, Pelathope Vedanta Desika Swami Street, Mylapore, Chennai 600004

the rich history and cultural heritage of Mylapore.” As the name suggests, the Open House is open to all, and it is aimed at discussing “opportunities to collaborate in setting up a meaningful community design initiative focussed on the neighbourhood scale as part of the urban living lab.”

The open house would be marked by exhibitions, archival showcases, guided walkthroughs, and community conversations (which allow visitors to can engage with architects, historians and residents about the past, present and future of Mylapore).

The communication notes the Open House would witness the launch of two key initiatives: The Pelathope Community Archives and The Mylapore 15-Minute Cultural Neighbourhood Map.

The communication elaborates that the Pelathope Community Archive consists of oral histories from previously unrecorded or forgotten narrators, archival photographs, and documents highlighting the history of Pelathope and Mylapore, organised around thematic areas of culture, community, infrastructure/planning, and ecology. This exercise is underpinned by the hope that the “discovery of unexplored histories will resonate with others in the neighbourhood, leading to alternative readings of Mylapore that can foster a better understanding

of the dynamics of neighbourhood change.”

The communication adds: “The Mylapore 15-Minute Cultural Neighborhood Map is a crowd-sourced document that seeks to highlight the unique cultural heritage of the neighbourhood. This serves as a starting point for creating a broad-based and inclusive (re)development framework that leverages the cultural and heritage assets of Mylapore. The expected focus of this framework includes enhancing the local economy, preserving and enhancing tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and identifying high-impact community projects such as last-mile connectivity interventions and shared community spaces that can improve social cohesion and tangibly enhance the quality of life in Mylapore.”

The organisers are also running a photo contest – Mylapore Through Your Lens – which will be exhibiting shortlisted entries and announcing winners at the Open House.

Two structures would be central to the exercise. One popularly known as 40 Pelathope (which now goes by the new number 16 while retaining its old number 40) is steeped in history; so are the three row houses right opposite this structure. A section of the row houses which underwent a renovation, one that was easy on its original character, will mark the physical space of the Pelathope Urban Living Lab by being a congregating point for residents as well as entities that have the agency to effect positive changes in Pelathope as well as the rest of Mylapore.

A view of Pelathope; and a close look at ‘40 Pelathope’, a famous address on the street. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

Though running parallel to North Mada Street, Pelathope hardly shares in its spotlight. Pelathope is a cul-de-sac and its days unspool to a rather fixed script with little room for improvisation. The odds are high that anyone unfamiliar with Mylapore has not heard of

Pelathope (which means “jackfruit grove” in Tamil). Even Google maps would be silent on it: as this old name of the street is overshadowed by an official name, one popularised by Google Maps – Vedanta Desika Swami Street.

Next weekend – March 21, 22 and 23 – is going to be in the public

glare as a result of what is called The Pelathope Urban Living Lab – Open House, an initiative by SKDO in collaboration with PLUS, Curating for Culture, UCAN and Cultural Heritage Narratives.

According to a communication from the organisers, the initiative offers an “opportunity to explore



During the launch of the library at House of Hiranandani Upscale.

A new chapter begins

House of Hiranandani Upscale now has a library as one of the amenities

VINI BHATIA

Last Sunday, the clubhouse at House of Hiranandani Upscale in Egattur, Old Mahabalipuram Road came alive with the launch of the much-anticipated “Let’s Read at Hira” event, marking the opening of Hira Library.

As founder of Asha Foundation, I had the privilege of organising this event in collaboration with Raghavan Murti, Vijay and Shambhavi. Our goal was to bring the community together through the shared love of books, creativity and storytelling.

The evening began with a warm welcome speech by Shambhavi, who set the tone for an inspiring celebration of literature. Mokshi’s soulful prayer and song performance brought a serene and reflective atmosphere to the event. Hira Library recognises the power of stories to shape our lives, foster connections and inspire new ideas – a point I could not help dwelling on when I took the stage to present my views.

Vijay shared the incredible three-year journey behind the creation of the library, reflecting on the challenges and joys of bringing the project to life. Maya Shriram, in her address, beautifully highlighted how books teach us empathy. She

urged the audience to read widely, beyond popular writers, as even lesser-known books have the potential to connect us with diverse feelings and perspectives.

Shobha V’s storytelling session was a highlight, captivating the audience with her engaging and entertaining narrative. Aditi, too, mesmerised us with her heartfelt short story, leaving everyone in awe of her wonderful style of delivery.

The evening also featured a cake-cutting ceremony, followed by the awarding of prizes to winners of our pre-launch competitions. We had over 70 participants who showcased their creative talent in categories such as bookmark design, book cover creation and blurb writing. It was wonderful to celebrate their passion for literature.

As the event came to a close, Pallavi expressed heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved, ensuring the success of this special evening. With an exciting calendar of upcoming activities, Hira Library is set to become a vibrant hub for learning, imagination and community engagement. The launch of “Let’s Read at Hira” marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for all who cherish the magic of books.

(Vini Bhatia is founder of Asha Foundation)



READERS WRITE

Postal services infrastructure inadequate on OMR

R. RAMASWAMY

Sholinganallur, the largest electorate in the State, is served by a post office tucked away in a manner that makes it inaccessible. It is in a corner of a narrow road that is always congested with water and septic tankers.

The nearest bus stop is more than two kilometres away making it extremely difficult for the residents in the area, particularly senior citizens who constitute the majority of customers of Sholinganallur Post Office, to access the facility. During summer and rainy seasons, the trek to this post office is unenviable. With the roads being too narrow and pockmarked with potholes, even for those who travel



Photo used for representational purpose only

by cars, it is a challenging experience to reach this post office from the main road.

Despite repeated representations to the Post Master General and other postal authorities, nothing has been done to relocate this post office to a more accessible place. This post office is equally important for the businesses as most of the top notch IT companies

and multinational corporates have their offices on OMR only. The relocation of this post office to somewhere near Sholinganallur signal is a must and needs to be taken up on a priority basis.

Besides, there is no post office beyond Sholinganallur/Chemmencherry - right upto Thorupporur. A post office in Padur or Kelambakkam is badly required.

As OMR is the most bustling residential and commercial locality in the city with a huge number of workforce working in two shifts – the post office here should be made a 24/7 office to serve the residents and offices.

(R. Ramaswamy is a resident of Kumaraswamy Nagar in Sholinganallur)



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Cloth bag vending machines opened at six locations in south region

Greater Chennai Corporation is taking this initiative to expand Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board's anti-plastic campaign



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The 'Meendum Manjappai' campaign has got a boost. Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, which has been installing these vending machines at strategic locations, has got the support of Greater Chennai Corporation to expand this initiative aimed at reducing the use of single-use plastics.

On March 14, the automated cloth vending machines were inaugurated at six locations in south zone covering

Thiruvannmiyur, Palavakkam, Sholinganallur, Valasaravakkam and Nanganallur. The chosen locations are either near a market, temple or supermarket.

"Over the years, TNPCB was involved in installing and maintaining these vending machines. This is the first time in South Chennai that GCC has played a key role," says N. Nireshkumar, superintendent of parks, GCC. Recently, 10 vending machines were installed in Central and North zones by GCC, he says.

GCC chose locations where the foot-

The locations

- Zone XI office in Valasaravakkam
- Division 153 office in Porur, near Saravana Stores
- 4th Main Road, Nanganallur
- Thiruvannmiyur market
- Division office (183), Palavakkam
- Near Nilgiris supermarket, Model School Road, Sholinganallur

fall is on higher side and there is a noticeable demand for eco-friendly bags. "A vending machine was installed at Nanganallur Fourth Main Road, which has a market, park and temple close by. Likewise, one is placed near the Thiruvannmiyur market," says the official.

Out of the six machines, five were sponsored by TNPCB, and one was procured by GCC.

According to a press release, the Manjappai vending machine, designed by Instagood Technologies Pvt. Ltd., is an IoT-based smart vending system that offers a simple, hassle-free solution for acquiring cloth bags. Users can insert a ₹10 coin or currency note, or make a cashless transaction through UPI payment options. The machine has a storage capacity of 500 bags and can be quickly restocked. It is accessible for the physically challenged.

The vending machine enables real-time tracking of stock levels, machine health, and transaction data across multiple locations.

"There is a plan to install more such vending machines in the coming months and we will be studying the response at all these places," the official adds.

Cultural event at school



Bala Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Adyar, organised a cultural extravaganza recently. In the school premises, bringing together a vibrant celebration of talent and tradition. Around 200 students took part. The events included music and dance, says a press release.

Workshop on bee keeping

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a culinary workshop on March 20. According to a press release, the session will focus on ready-to-cook food items such as idli, adai, murukku, puttu and a few more. Another workshop on bee keeping will be held on March 21. 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

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Railway staff honoured



In commemoration of International Women's Day, Southern Railway Women's Headquarters Organization (SRWHQO) felicitated 26 women employees in recognition of their exemplary work during last year.

According to a press release, over 100 women including officials and staff attended the event which was inaugurated by Sonia Singh, president, SRWHQO, in the presence of Rekha Kaushal, vice-president, SRWHQO. Various Cultural events were also part of the celebration.

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Vinayaka Missions Chennai Campus Celebrates Women's Day 2025



Vinayaka Missions Chennai Campus Celebrates Women's Day 2025Chennai, March 5, 2025 – Vinayaka Missions Chennai Campus, in association with the Women Empowerment Cell (WEC), hosted an inspiring Women's Day Celebration honoring women's achievements across various fields. The event began with a prayer song and lamp lighting ceremony, followed by a warm welcome from Dr. Giri Rengasamy, Dean of CSR, VMRF. Distinguished guests, including Thiru S. Arunraj, I.A.S., District Collector of Chengalpattu, and Ms. Neera Misra, Founder of the Droupadi Dream Trust, were honored for their contributions to society. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan, Honourable Madam Chancellor of VMRF, delivered the Presidential Address, emphasizing the importance of women's empowerment

and fostering inclusive environments. Special addresses from Swami Srihari Prasad and Dr. Christianna Singh highlighted the vital role of women in societal progress and student development. The ceremony featured the presentation of the VMRF Women of Excellence Awards 2025 to Dr. K. R. Maalathi and Mrs. R. Seethadevi for their contributions to education and community service. Women Leadership Awards and Women Achiever Awards recognized outstanding women in medical education, healthcare, and corporate leadership. Special recognition was also given to single mothers supporting their children's education. The celebration concluded with the National Anthem, reaffirming Vinayaka Missions' commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.