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September 28, 2025
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'Waterlogging is new to this road in Karukku'



Waterlogging on Old Karukku Road in Ambattur on September 22, 2025 and the compound wall of the pond.

PHOTOS: AKHILA ESWARAN AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Greater Chennai Corporation constructed a compound wall around a pond at Karukku Old Road in Ambattur around eight months ago. But no provision has been made to drain water from the road into the pond, and this results in water logging. It should be noted Karukku Old Road has not witnessed waterlogging all these years. This was the case even during torrential rains and cyclones. However, following last week's moderate showers that lasted just half-an-hour, the road was found waterlogged. Last week, there were a couple of instances of an ambulance being unable to drive through this stretch. Karukku Old Road is important because it is the only approach road to Karukku and its adjoining neighbourhoods. Greater Chennai Corporation should therefore do the needful at the earliest as north-east monsoon is round the corner.

K N Srinivas
Karukku

'Roads in Sekkadu difficult to navigate'



Stormwater drain construction at Thirukumaran Nagar in Sekkadu in Avadi is moving at a tardy pace. The work began this January and the work is not complete to this day. The dug-up roads have become worse following the recent rains. There have been instances of vehicles getting stuck on this road.

M. Senthil, Villivakkam



'Mending of road makes slow progress'

Jai Nagar First Main Road in Arumbakkam caved in this August. Along with it, a manhole of a main sewage pipe also sunk resulting in sewage overflow. The pit is getting widened and deepened day by day. This is hindering hassle free movement of vehicular traffic.

Jai Nagar First Main Road witnesses good traffic as it connects two other arterial roads – 100 Feet Jawaharlal Nehru Main Road and Poonamallee High Road. The road should therefore be restored at the earliest.

N. Chitti Babu, Arumbakkam



'Kovil Pathagai Road, a picture of squalor'

It is more than a year since the garbage bins on Kovil Pathagai Road in Avadi were removed. In the absence of bins, there is no designated spot to dump waste. Hence, the public is dumping waste wherever they wish. The section of the road from Ajay stadium to Vel Tech junction is an assault on the senses and is unhygienic.

D.Suresh, Thirumullaivoyal

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READERS WRITE

'Shoddy work at 6th Avenue'



On 6th Avenue in Anna Nagar, the volume of vehicular traffic is usually on the higher side. A few months ago, a Government agency dug up a proper road to take up repair work. Close to six places were opened up on account of this exercise. Later, the pits were closed but this is how the road looks now. Due to this shoddy job, the road has become a driving hazard. Accidents are waiting to happen. The authorities must step in and ensure that the contractor does a proper job.

Satyan Bhatt, 6th Main Road, Anna Nagar

Annual chess tournament has a new addition

Jaigopal Garodia Memorial Chess Academy is hosting its 25th State-Level Chess Tournament for both boys and girls under five categories on October 12, 2025 at Smt. Durgadevi Choudhary Vivekananda Vidyalaya Senior Secondary School in Kolathur.

As part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations, a tournament exclusively for para chess aspirants will be held on October 11, 2025.

Jaigopal Garodia Memorial Chess Academy was started to popularise chess, to train and nurture the talent and to expose young champions to state and national-level tournaments. Ever since its inception, young talented aspirants have been given coaching by expert coaches on the school premises.

The chess academy was initiated by Jaigopal Garodia, founder and chairman, JGV Trust, an educationist, a philanthropist and a visionary who has been doing yeoman service in imparting education and serving the community through various organisations, says a press release.

As an inclusive extension of the tournament persons with disabilities including those with vision impairment, speech and hearing challenges are invited to take part in it. Competitions will be held from U-7 to U-17. The last date to register is October 9. Attractive cash prizes will be given to the win-

ners, added the release.

Interested participants must register at easypaychess.com / chessfee.com / paychessentry.com

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Retired kolu dolls make a comeback



An artist, Renu Sabanayagam does not buy kolu dolls in mint condition, but gets those broken in body and restores their look and purpose

PRINCE FREDERICK

Renu Sabanayagam calls erstwhile kolu dolls out of retirement, rehabilitates them and puts them back on the Navarathri beat.

Each doll in her kolu collection now can share an account of how wholesomeness was restored to it. When Renu picked them up, these dolls were lying in dingy cubby-holes and dusty antique stores, broken in body. Missing body parts had to be reconstructed and glued on to their frames, which were usually hugely lacklustre, requiring deft dabs of an enamel paint-carrying brush. Renu has made them whole again in an ongoing do-it-yourself project (est. 2018). In her own words, this project (entirely a hobby to her) has so far notched up a tally somewhere between 200 and 300 dolls, each of them restored variously.

The artist in Renu encourages her to seek those dolls that need to check into a workstation before ascending the kolu stage. Quoting Renu: "I am able to do this work only because I know how to draw and paint." Though "Renu the artist" is germane to the topic, let us save that for the last.

The Kolu display stands out for its diversity, the dolls differing noticeably in stature and dimension.

Renu, a resident of Kesavaperumal-puram in R.A. Puram, explains: "Nothing I got, I got as a set. That is why the dolls are in disparate sizes. I think in those days they used to make the Ramayana set and all that. But nothing has been handed down to me from those days. This is not from my in-



Sections of Renu Sabanayagam's kolu; some of the dolls she has restored; her artwork based on Gond tribal art; and a pair of white shoes she embellished with painting for her granddaughter. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



laws, this is not from my parents. This is what I have collected myself in antique shops. So, sometimes you get big dolls, sometimes small dolls."

A walkaround

In traditional kolu displays, the dolls sit squat on stands with multiple steps (*kolu padi*), resembling school students in a bleachers-style seating arrangement, every strand of hair slicked into place for a group photograph. This tiered arrangement works best when the author of the display is faced with restrictive spatial bandwidth. Renu need not skimp on space, but

that is only half the reason for dispensing with the traditional display format. The other half, the more compelling one, is that her kolu tableaux accommodates multiple themes, and demands (and warrants) a walkaround. The result: a "banquet" distinguished by "themed counters", each representing a purana.

How she put together a collection with its various themes provides a microscopic view of the human situation, giving a peek into the weighty philosophical question of determinism versus free will. Renu's collection seems to prove one has agency to craft



searched for a Rama doll to match this. But no Rama doll I found came equal to the beauty of these two dolls. I could not match it. I told myself 'Why not try something new?' And so, I did the Lakshman Rekha part of the story.' She placed a decorative tape to signify the Lakshman Rekha with the Sita and Lakshmana dolls in the picture.

The themes she has stitched together working around the inherent limitations of her uncompromising kolu-designing philosophy include Rama avatar, Krishna avatar, Meenakshi kalyanam, Trishabha vahana, a collection of Vahanas, the story of Kannappa Nayanan from Periya Puranam, the story of Kothai becoming Andal. Towards the fag end of the walkaround, one notices a shift in focus. She has dolls demonstrating justice delivered and denied from the seat of power by Maunu Nidhi Cholan and Pandya king Nedunchezhan respectively. The tour ends with two themes, each sending out a message to the modern, largely urban consumerist soul – how ancient traditions conserved water and eschewed excess even in wedding ceremonies.

An illustration from Renu: "I found these two beautiful dolls, which were Sita and Lakshmana. And for a long time, I Now, let us have a glimpse of the reha-

bilitation process. Renu works with clay and enamel paint to restore these dolls. Dexterity is an invisible ingredient. Terracotta dolls make a massive majority, coming close to constituting the entire collection. And sandblasting an old, vintage car, 10 feet long and abandoned for a hundred years is an undemanding exercise when compared with cleaning a terracotta doll that fits in between the thumb and the index finger. Porous, terracotta dolls accumulate considerable dirt. Brittle, they can give way under slightly sustained pressure. One can be certain she was breathing easy while working on a handful of wooden dolls, also on display at the kolu."

Says Rajendran: "She gets shoes, white shoes. And she paints on the white shoes for all the children. I have given her one of my white shoes and I have asked her to paint it for me."

That would likely be the immediate project following this kolu season – Rajendran hopes it is.

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Art challenge driven by AI celebrates Durga Puja

SMCA Charitable Trust in association with HashHackCode is conducting the competition on October 1 for children



evolve into an inspiring space for technological exploration—offering children a glimpse of the future while honouring cherished traditions.

SMCA Charitable Trust is a community organisation in Chennai dedicated to promoting art, culture and social welfare. Through year-round activities including music, dance, educational initiatives and charitable outreach – SMCA fosters community engagement and preserves cultural heritage while embracing modern, inclusive ideas.

The event

When: October 1

Time: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Venue: Mantra Gardens, Nandanam Extension, Chennai - 600035

Who can join: Children aged 8-16; no prior experience required

Registration link: <http://bit.ly/HHCSMCA>
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Smoothing out the jagged edges of redevelopment

Apartment associations seeking to restructure their facilities increasingly seek consultants who serve as a bridge between owners and promoters

LIFFY THOMAS

Project management consultants in the city are increasingly stepping into a new role – mediator in redevelopment projects. Their mandate involves getting buy-ins from all owners, liaising with a developer that has the best deal to offer, clarifying nagging doubts about the legal and technical feasibility of such projects and carrying out paper work.

Ever since Tamil Nadu Apartment Owners Rules, 2024 came into effect, many apartment complexes that are more than 30 years old are keen on taking the redevelopment route. But a lack of familiarity with the nitty-gritty of the process holds them back.

One of the biggest challenges is ensuring all owners in an apartment are on board. Some would have personal reasons (which they might want to keep personal, making things worse) for not joining a



File photo used for representational purpose.

redevelopment project. Some would be handicapped by the fact that they do not live in the community; and they would not want to spare time for the various rounds of discussion.

"Each owner would have unique challenges and it is up to us to work with them and on those challenges," says Sivaram V. of Vaidyanath Estates. "One of my clients wanted us to persuade a senior resident staying on the ground floor to agree for a joint development of

the apartment with no lift. Some owners did not want to move out of the locality during the redevelopment period."

Sivaram says it is the residents association or owners that sign them on to tackle these issues.

Choosing a developer with a reputation for meeting project deadlines, one who can offer additional benefits, negotiating the price with the builder and the rental compensation are among things they mediate over.

Ramesh Kumar's research shows that there are 50-70 micro markets where redevelopment is happening in Chennai. "More than 50,000 buildings, which range from two grounds to two acres, are waiting in Chennai for redevelopment. Owners come with clippings of news items but lack clarity, and many are not staying in the flat they invested in, and so we provide them with guidance through the processes ranging from the CMDA approval process to the legal com-

pliance list," says Ramesh of Aspire Project Management Services.

He says getting information from the owners is another big task. "UDS (undivided share of land) distribution was not uniform as per the saleable area when these owners bought the property several years ago. Many do not like to share their UDS details and some want more area," says Ramesh, adding that he charges ₹ 5,000 for preparing the report that talks about feasibility and provides other details.

Discrepancy because of UDS makes it difficult to bring all owners to the discussion table. "These have to be handled on a case-to-case basis, sometimes you have to involve the builder," says Sivaram.

Some professionals such as Sivaram do not take a fee from small communities; instead, the developer gives them a percentage once the deal is made.

Vikram Chandiramani, director, Rams Builders, says they do work with such consultants as long as the owners are fine with it.

"We have only come across individuals who are doing this, but as the market opens up this would become a professional service," says Vikram. While many owners like to have a direct conversation with the builder, some think a consultant would ask for a brokerage.

He says one must study the background of the person, see if they are a subject matter expert, quiz them on various aspects of redevelopment, understand what their terms are, and take a decision.

World Heart Day: quiz for school students

As part of its education awareness initiative, Dr. Kamakshi Memorial Hospitals has launched a quiz programme, "Heart Wise" for students in classes V to IX.

Organised as part of World Heart Day 2025 (September 29), the event is aimed at inspiring students to take an interest in their health and understand the importance of heart care. The quiz will cover topics such as the basics of the human heart, nutrition, exercise, lifestyle choices, and preventive healthcare.

On October 6, the preliminary round will be held online. The shortlisted students will compete in the semi-finals and finals, scheduled to take place on October 12 at the hospital auditorium in Pallikaranai at 2 p.m.

Students can register at <https://bit.ly/heartwisequiz25>, and schools can call 98840 89340.

For further details, email your queries to quiztime@zigmaads.com

CMRL opens Lost and Found Office at Chennai Central

Lost something during your trip on the metro rail? No need to panic. The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has facilitated a Lost and Found office at the Chennai Central Metro Station.

Commuters can approach a single dedicated facility to retrieve their lost belongings during travel.

For queries regarding lost and found items, commuters may email: LFO@cmrl.in; the website is <https://chennaimetrorail.org/lost-and-found-enquiry>, says a press release from the CMRL.

CMRL will not be responsible for any lost items. However, belongings lost during travel can be retrieved at the respective station or the centralised Lost and Found Office, the release adds.



Prince Group honours professors with awards

The Prince Group of Institutions recently hosted the 'Prince Perasiriyar Virudhu' ceremony to recognise professors for their contributions to research and education innovations.

The ceremony took place at Prince Shri Venkateshwara Padmavathy Engineering College in Ponmar.

V. Narayanan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), presented

awards and certificates to the professors.

Narayanan emphasised the vital role of teachers in shaping a nation. He said that the discipline and values taught by teachers, along with education help build a strong and ethical society.

Professors from various institutions were honoured. They include: N. Pappa from Anna University, Pandiarajan from Agni College, R. Naraya-

namoorthi from SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Haider Lenin A from Saveetha Engineering College, A. R. Aravind from Prince Shri Venkateshwara Padmavathy Engineering College, P. Rameshkumar from PSN Engineering College, Dr. S. Baskar from Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies, and V. J. Kishor Sonti from Sathyabama Institute of Science & Technology.



From a recent vaccination drive conducted by Blue Cross of India

GCC's pet clinics

Greater Chennai Corporations run six pet clinics in the city at Thiru-Vi-Ka Nagar, Nungambakkam, Meenambakkam, Pulianthope, Llyods Road and Kannamapet. Visit <https://chennai.corporation.gov.in/gcc/veterinary/contact/petclinic/> for exact location and contact numbers.

conducted on September 20 and 21.

The team from People for Cattle in India (PFCI) have set a target of administering 100 vaccines on World Rabies Day – 60 dogs and 40 cats drawn from neighbourhoods in Ambatur and Avadi.

HeavenForAnimal is planning a massive drive in October that will be launched at a school in Chetpet before a mobile vehicle heads to different locations.

VinodKumaaar Sankara Panicker, general manager, Blue Cross of India, says for strays to get real immunity, vaccination drives must be done once a year. "Last year, we vaccinated 5,000 dogs and this year we plan to increase the count to 8,500 dogs, thanks to HCL Foundation that is supporting us in a big way," says Vinod.

Besides dedicated locations where owners can come with their pets, Blue Cross team fans out to various neighbourhoods to vaccinate strays.

Unlike sterilisation where the dogs are notched on their ears, in vaccination dogs are marked with a ve-

getable dye that helps them being identified as vaccinated.

The economics of it and poor awareness are reasons why people in the outskirts are ignorant about

vaccination.

Vaccination protects animals from the deadly disease, and by extension, humans. Vaccinated pets further prevent the spread of rabies in humans.

Dr Arun Pari, a veterinary consultant, says if one is bitten by a stray dog, they must go and take a rabies vaccine as well as a multi-antigen shot. Getting the first dose of the rabies vaccine as soon as possible after rabies exposure is advised.

"The first rabies shot should be done within 24 hours of being bitten; this is something people ignore," says Dr Arun.

Animal welfare groups say cost of vaccine and manpower are among challenges they face in vaccinating as many strays as possible.

"If you have community dogs in your street, the best gift to give them is ensuring they are vaccinated either at free camps happening in the city or pool in money and take them to the hospital," says Vinod.

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WORLD RABIES DAY: SEPTEMBER 28

A safe shot

Animal welfare groups have intensified efforts to vaccinate dogs, both strays and pets, against rabies across Chennai. Residents can promote the drive and also benefit from it

LIFFY THOMAS

When was the last time you took your dog to the vet? Pets require an annual checkup. The vaccination schedule cannot be compromised.

September 28 is World Rabies Day and the theme this year, for the first time in

19 years, does not include the word "rabies", says the World Health Organisation. The theme this time - "Act now: you, me, communities". It calls on everyone to be more responsible, work together with others and drive real change.

With recent disturbing instances of rabies-related death and Supreme Court's latest order on street dogs, animal welfare organisations

have intensified vaccination across Chennai.

Staff and volunteers of Blue Cross of India will be revisiting Kannagi Nagar on September 28 to conduct a camp for strays. They had vaccinated the strays there against rabies last year. The NGO has been focusing on localities outside Greater Chennai Corporation limits, Avadi being a key focus this year (a two-day camp was

Unlike sterilisation where the dogs are notched on their ears, in vaccination dogs are marked with a ve-



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