

## T. NAGAR

Saidapet » West Mambalam » Vadapalani » Porur » Kattupakkam » Irungattukottai » Nungambakkam » Manapakkam » Ashok Nagar » Valasaravakkam  
Gerugambakkam » Mangadu » Choolaimedu » Egmore » K K Nagar » Kodambakkam » Virugambakkam » Somangalam » Poonamalee » Chetpet



### FOLLOWING URBAN RAPTORS

Project Raptor Watch 2.0 by Madras Naturalists' Society in the Chennai Metropolitan Area has spread its wings and achieved elevation **P4&5**



### LAUGH THE BLUES AWAY AT PANAGAL PARK

Members of this Laughter Club are taking this art to other parks in the city **P3**

## These parks in Saligramam are *uninviting*



**T**he Greater Chennai Corporation - run park near AWHO - Parameswaran Vihar park in Saligramam on Arcot Road is in a sorry state.

According to residents, the park was renovated in April 2024 after many years of neglect; however within a few months it has again been reduced to a deplorable condition.

It is difficult to access the park as its entrances are blocked by parking of vehicles and things belonging to nearby shops, say residents.

They also pointed out that it is not cleaned regularly and the benches and the play equipment are damaged.

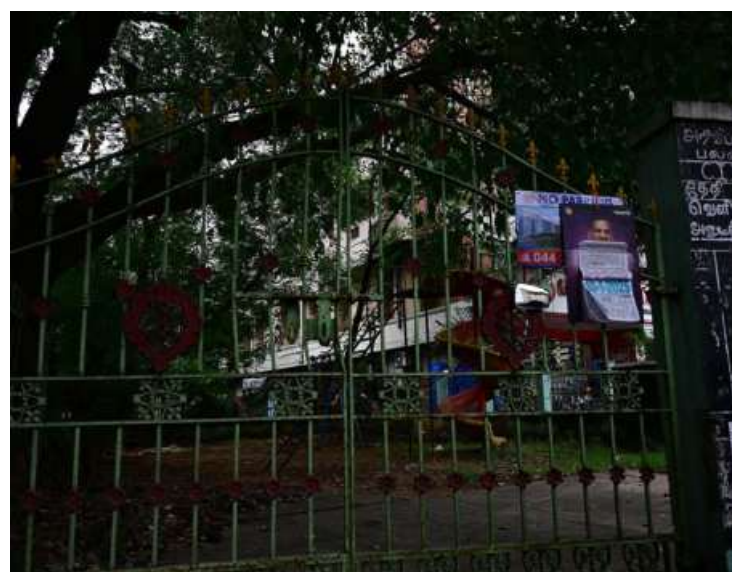
Likewise, another park diagonally opposite Parameswaran Vihar park, which is near Muthu-

kumarappa Street wears a desolate look.

"The play equipment and lights are not adequate. A good part of the park is covered with leaf litter. It is years since the park had any visitor.

During night, the place is misused to consume alcohol," says a resident of Muthukumarappa Street.

*Text: L. Kanthimathi*



Glimpses of Parameswaran Vihar park and Muthukumarappa Street park in Saligramam. PHOTOS: B. VELANKANNI RAJ



## 'Salute to Mother' programme to be held on January 23

Through this initiative by Sri Krishna Sweets, more than 100 mothers have been honoured so far

**S**ri Krishna Sweets is organising the 14th edition of Salute to Mothers programme in which mothers of celebrities are honoured. Salute to Mothers programme will be held at Narada Gana Sabha (from 5.45

p.m. onwards) on January 23.

Justice R. Hemalatha, judge, High Court of Madras, S. Sivasankari, writer and Major General M. Indrabalan will be the chief guests.

Mathru Pooja Recital will be performed by Isaikkavi Ramanan. Students of Viswasamasthan School of Bharathanatyam will perform at the event. The students are trained by S.Vijayalakshmi.

K.V.Subha, advocate, Chennai, will be the Master of Ceremonies.

This year, the organisers are also honouring a family - Geetha Varadarajan, R.Varadarajan, pa-

rents of Major Mukund Varadarajan who dedicated his life during a counter-terrorism operation.

The following mothers will be honoured during this year's Salute to Mothers programme :

S.Annapoorni, mother of S.Balasundaram, Head of Payments, Financial Services, Walmart; Bakkiyalakshmi Devi Shanmugam, M/O Desa Mangaiyarkarasi, Tamil literary personality and singer; M.Balasaraswathy, M/O Sri Murugesu Lankalingam, CMD, Lanson Group of Companies; Harani Ekhaambarresh, M/O Sri Sai Abhyankar, music composer, pro-

ducer and singer; Indira Seshadri, M/O T.K. Bhaskar, Advocate, Partner - H&B Partners, Chennai; Jamuna Chandrayya, M/O Dr. Geetha HariPriya, Chairperson and Medical Director, Prashanth Fertility Centre and Prashanth Hospitals; Kamala Narasimhan, M/O Sreekanth Narasimhan, Joint Secretary, Meenakshi College for Women; Mangala Nandagopal, M/O Senthil Kumar Nandagopal, Vice Chairman, India Operations, REVATURE; Padmini Srinivasan, M/O Gayathri Girish, Carnatic vocalist; Pushpavalli Chinnasamy, M/O Umamaheswari Yuvaraj, Di-

rector, Ananya's Nana Nani Homes, Ananya Shelters, Coimbatore; Usha Sukumar, M/O Divya Abhishek, Youngest Chairperson of Southern India Regional Council of the Institute of Cost Accountants of India; Vasanthi Rajendren, M/O G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan, G.R. Radhakrishnan, Managing Directors, GRT Group; and Vijayalakshmi Srinivasan, M/O Preethi Srinivasan, co-founder, Soulfree.

More than 100 celebrity mothers have been honoured so far. In this programme celebrities will speak about their mothers.



## READERS WRITE

## 'Sewage is discharged into SWDs in Kovur'



At the Kovur section of Perungalathur - Puzhal Chennai Bypass. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tankers discharging sewage into stormwater drains is a common sight at the Kovur section of Perungalathur - Puzhal Chennai Bypass. We have also noticed that these vehicles are without any registration number.

**J Pandiaraj**  
Kovur



The lane under Kodambakkam flyover following the rains in December 2024. PHOTO SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## 'Waterlogging under Kodambakkam flyover'

The service lane under Kodambakkam flyover is prone to waterlogging even in the event of a mild or moderate shower. It takes three days for the water to drain. As the rainy season is over now, Greater Chennai Corporation should attend to this problem and provide a lasting solution.

**N. Ravikkumaar**  
Nungambakkam

## You can be our volunteer-writer

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

## Commuters find bus shelter inconvenient

The brick-and-mortar bus shelter at Valluvarkottam stop on Nungambakkam High Road ceased to serve commuters ever since the nearby stainless steel shelter came up years ago.

However, the brick-and-mortar facility is being put to use ever since traffic diversion came into effect during the early months of 2024.

As part of the diversion, vehicles (including MTC buses) proceeding toward Sterling Road junction on Uttamar Gandhi Salai have been diverted via Nungambakkam High Road with the aim of facilitating metro rail work in the vicinity.

Those buses that are diverted halt at the brick-and-mortar facility. Service numbers 29C and 41D are a few examples. But the seats of the brick-and-mortar bus-shelter are evidently inconvenient.

Yet another issue is a tree leaning over the roof of the shelter. Commuters say this problem should be addressed without felling the tree.

*Text: L. Kanthimathi*



Not a comfortable wait for commuters at this stop in Valluvarkottam.

## Land near Chetpet railway station misused as dumping ground



A parcel of vacant land near Chetpet railway station is being misused to dump garbage and all other kinds of waste including mattresses and furniture. Further, the place is overrun with vegetation. Commuters complain of stench during rains and that the place is being misused to consume alcohol during night.



## This notice board in Iyyappanthangal is taken seriously

Its effectiveness lies in its ability to elicit sympathy for conservancy workers

A banner near VM Hall at VGN Nagar First Main Road in Iyyappanthangal requesting the public to refrain from dumping waste has brought about a desirable change.

The road in front of the hall was becoming a dumping spot. Hence in an attempt to prevent this practice, the manager of the hall kept a



The spot where garbage was dumped; and (right) after the banner was placed, people have refrained from dumping garbage there.



banner last month. Unlike other banners and notice boards, installed by municipal bodies, which are treated with scant regard, this

one was taken seriously by the public. It eventually served the purpose. The success lies in its ability to summon sympathy for the con-

servancy workers.

The banner carries the photo of two conservancy workers, who with folded hands request the public to make use of the bins located nearby. The conservancy workers in the photo are currently working for Iyyappanthangal Village Panchayat; hence they are familiar faces to the local residents.

"With the consent of the workers, their photos have been carried in the banner. A month before this, we had put up another banner without the photo of the workers but it evoked no response. But to

our pleasant surprise, this one did," says S. Harikrishnan, the hall's manager.

P. Senthil Kumar, a resident of VGN Nagar First Main Road, sees this banner as a brilliant approach that should be emulated in other locations by municipal bodies.

"Heaps of waste can be found around notice boards installed by municipal bodies. But ever since this private notice board with the photo of conservancy workers was placed, nobody is dumping garbage here. At this juncture, I request the Panchayat to enforce waste segregation at source," says Senthil Kumar.

*Text: L. Kanthimathi*



# Laugh the blues away at Panagal Park

Members of this Laughter Club are taking this art to other parks in the city



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

If you happen to be at Panagal Park in T. Nagar around 7.30 a.m. then you should take a look at the activities of this group usually dressed in matching t-shirts. One can see them clap-

ping, practising breathing exercises and following it with a burst of laughter. They promise to give you energy, free of cost.

They are the members of the Laughter Club, an informal group that was started more than 20 years ago inspired by the movement in Mumbai.

They practise breathing exercises that promise to cultivate joy, bring out the inner child in the person, and help one let go of daily life stressors.

Sixty-three-year-old K.B. Kumar says it was Ravi Brindavan who brought the Laughter Club to Chennai. "Today, we have close to



The morning routine

70 members in our WhatsApp group with an average of 20 attending our daily meetups in the park," says Kumar, a resident of T.Nagar.

When the Club started they used to meet at Natesan Park. The entrance of Panagal Park has been their favourite spot for some years now.

For a sense of unity and alignment, members wear uniforms. The dress code for Monday is white; for Tuesday, yellow; and for

Wednesday, blue.

Ravi Chandran Narayanan, another long-time member who joined the Club during his walks in the park, says members have learnt the art and branched out to start similar clubs in other parks.

"Every Sunday, a similar group meets near the Gandhi Statute on the Marina and we have another one at Nageshwara Rao Park in Mylapore," says Ravi, who retired from BSNL.

The first Sunday in May, which is observed as World Laughter Day, is celebrated as the anniversary of the Club. Club members take stock of all that they have gained from this movement.

***They practise breathing exercises that promise to cultivate joy and bring out the inner child in the person***

## Additional buses for people returning to the city

To help the passengers returning from their native places to Chennai, the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) will operate an additional 150 buses on January 19 from Kalaingar

Centenary Bus Terminus, Kilambakkam. On January 20, the MTC will operate an additional 500 buses, starting early in the morning to help people reach homes.

MTC will deploy its officers at the bus terminus at Kilambakkam, Tambaram Railway Station, Poonamallee, Koyambedu, Madhavaram Mofussil Bus Terminus, Red Hills, and Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore Railway Stations to oversee the buses operations.



## WCC donates books to prisons department

Centre for Environmental Studies & Information Resource Centre of Women's Christian College donated around 70 books to the Department of Prisons & Correctional Services of Tamil Nadu at the recently con-

cluded book fair organised by the Book Sellers & Publishers Association of South India (BAPASI) held in Nandanam.

According to a press release, the prisons department had put up a stall at the fair for collecting books from visitors for the benefit of the prisoners.

Motivational and self-help books in Tamil and English were donated, adds the release.

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A female and a male Peregrine falcon at MRC Nagar; and a Black kite around the Perungudi landfill.  
PHOTOS: BHARATH RAVIKUMAR AND PRINCE FREDERICK

## A view from the window

On January 16, a tinkle in a WhatsApp group of Madras Naturalists' Society (MNS) made Gnanaskandan Kesavabharathi jump out of his seat. A tidbit of information that arrived with that tinkle demanded an immediate response and GK (as he is known in naturalist circles) was on to it, promptly keying in an instruction that elbowed two young MNS members on to the road to MRC Nagar.

The info that cranked up the series of actions – “not one but two Peregrine falcons lord it over a rash of buildings at MRC Nagar”. It was a tipoff from Ambika C., a resident of MRC Nagar with an MNS membership.

The two MNS members landed at the spot lickety-split to ascertain the snappy report's veracity. One of the questions to get out of the way: is the new entrant really a Peregrine falcon or a “lookalike”, some other falcon being mistaken for a Peregrine? As sure as eggs are eggs, there were two Peregrine falcons, a male and a female, greeting the two naturalists, while being perched on a tall building.

Project Raptor Watch (PRW), spearheaded by GK, has been studying this patch for at least three winters, if not more, as a Peregrine falcon had helped itself to it, making it its winter stay, choosing its perch among three tall buildings. The patch is now a divided territory with another Peregrine falcon wading into the space.

Bharath Ravikumar, one of the two MNS members to study two Peregrine falcons at MRC Nagar, observes: “It was 3.30 p.m. Both of them were perched far apart. There was no hint of any unrest or an inclination to ‘ward off’ the other; they were both calmly minding their own business. Around 4.30 p.m., the male took to the air and disappeared and half an hour later, he showed up and was perched on the same ledge as the female, but on the opposite end. This seemed to have disturbed her; and she started walking towards him and pushed him off the ledge.”

If observations elsewhere are anything to go by, they will tolerate each other and might even come to hunt together, as is the case at House of Hiranandani Upscale where two Peregrine falcons – a male and a female – are at ease with each other, sometimes launch-

ing what clearly appears to be a joint hunting expedition. These observations have been made by E. Arun Kumar, an MNS member residing at Upscale.

“Of course, as this is the wintering ground, they would not pair off, but they could likely form a bond strong enough to hunt together,” says GK about the two falcons at MRC Nagar. “Based on observations, the possibility of tolerance towards each other is higher if it is a male and a female. Territorial instinct would kick in stronger if both Peregrine falcons were of the same sex.”

### Regular visits

Continual monitoring of the patches in its focus is the hallmark of PRW, in fact PRW 2.0. GK notes that as a matter of routine, members of PRW 2.0 go on a raptor survey once a week. And when a freak occurrence needs to be investigated, they lose no time in doing so.

On the scope and focus of the project, GK says, “It is a longterm raptor monitoring programme of Madras Naturalists' Society which seeks to document, study and monitor the abundance, local movements, nesting and breeding activity of the raptors found in Kancheepuram, Thiruvallur, Chennai and Chengalpattu (KTCC) districts – defining it a tad differently, the Chennai Metropolitan Area.”

The study area extends to Pulicat in the north and Nayapakkam in the west. Thiruporur and beyond, Tiger Lily Lake being defining, brings up the southernmost point.

GK continues: “PRW 1.0 started in 2015 aimed at documenting the different raptor species seen in KTCC. PRW took a new shape in 2020 as PRW 2.0 giving birth to species-specific projects such as Black kite population monitoring at Perungudi dump site, Peregrine falcon abundance survey for KTCC and nest monitoring of resident raptor species such as the Red necked falcon and the White bellied sea eagle. The project is carried out by a dedicated group of 45 volunteers. The volunteers survey 15 different clusters covering 45 hot-pots. Historically, 32 raptor species have been recorded in this region and PRW has documented seven more for the region over the last

Project Raptor Watch 2.0 by Madras Naturalists' Society in the Chennai Metropolitan Area has spread its wings and achieved elevation. Among the exercises that have taken substantial shape are: the data-driven study of Peregrine falcons in markedly urban sites and a close look at the fluctuating Black kite population around the Perungudi landfill and the breeding patterns of the Red necked falcon

# Following urban raptors

PRINCE FREDERICK

one decade taking the current tally to 39 raptor species.”

### Black kite monitoring

For this project nestled within the larger PRW 2.0, binoculars were trained on the Perungudi dump site where one can see swarms of black kites at certain times of the year.

“There are Black kites that are resident in

Chennai. And there are Black kites that head to Chennai from elsewhere during the south west monsoon. A majority of the Black kites that migrate to the city during this period likely fly in from the west – Kerala and Karnataka – where the south west monsoon is the primary monsoon. When south west monsoon recedes, they go back to where they came from. At the height of the South west monsoon, the number of Black kites at the Perungudi dump site swelled to around 1,300 and now, it is hardly 20,” GK begins.

### Peregrine falcon survey

Another exercise under PRW 2.0, this survey is being conducted only in parts of KTCC where the Pere-

grine falcon is known to be present as also where it could be found.

Here is a break-up of the wintering Peregrine falcon population in apartments across Chennai.

Two at TVH Oranya Bay in Padur, Old Mahabalipuram Road; two at House of Hiranandani in Egattur; One at Bashyam OMR; one at Appaswamy OMR; one at DLF Garden City in Semmancherry; two at MRC Nagar; one at Trellis South in Vadapalani and one at Taisha in Saligramam. In

urban sites with a Peregrine falcon presence, those residing there help with data about the bird. “Through regular monitoring, we know the everyday movements and patterns of most of the Peregrine falcons,” he notes. “Now, we are on to the next stage of the Peregrine falcon survey – we are doing a pre-NE monsoon survey, the NE monsoon survey and post-NE monsoon survey to understand where the numbers differ. When the monsoonal rains subside, the Peregrine falcons return to their regular haunts. We do synchronised surveys to ensure the same Peregrine falcon is not counted again. When this study reaches the third year, we ex-

pect to have in-and-out data of around 30 Peregrine falcons.”

### The parameters

GK continues: “As we undertake a scientific study in these projects, certain parameters come into play – namely, weather, external disturbances, wind and rain. Through these parameters we see patterns. When JCB dredges up the dump site, the Black kite numbers will shoot up – this we would put down to external disturbance even as we ascertain the extent of the increase in numbers. When wind and rain cease, the Black kite numbers will go up. During rains, peregrine falcons will go into “hiding”.”

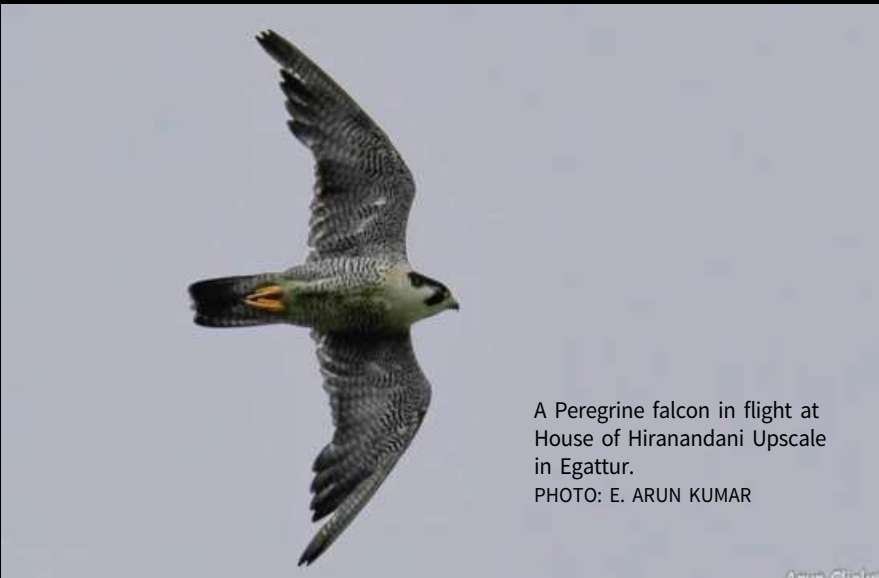
## Putting the air channel to good use

Peregrine falcons feel snug in declivitous landscapes – as much at ease in those crafted with human hands as with those occurring naturally.

When they shack up for the winter at House of Hiranandani Upscale in Egattur, the two Peregrine falcons would hardly miss the rock faces they are accustomed to back in their breeding grounds. The tall towers serve them well, probably far too well for them to long wistfully for them when they have made the return trip.

Upscale resident and MNS member E. Arun Kumar, who tracks the movements of these two Peregrine falcons – named Rana and Nandini – has studied how these towers are an incredible aid in these raptors' hunting expeditions.

Arun explains the science behind it. An air channel inevitably forms between the towers facing. Depending upon the direction in which they



A Peregrine falcon in flight at House of Hiranandani Upscale in Egattur.  
PHOTO: E. ARUN KUMAR

are flying, the pigeons find their flight aided or impeded by the air channel. When the air is blowing against the pigeons and slamming the brakes on

them, the Peregrine falcon that has soared high above the towers (where the air flows freely) takes advantage of the situation.

And then Arun goes on to discuss the artistry and the subterfuge that complement the science –narrating a hunt underpinned by this principle that he witnessed on a windy day just ahead of a massive wet rag of a day.

Arun narrates that given the weather, he was hoping, even expecting a pelagic bird to be buffeted about and finally fly his way. But he was instead treated to “a midair hunt by the fast and furious peregrine falcon”. And he is not complaining. With the aerial show put up by the Peregrine falcon, the disappointment disappeared into thin air.

The Peregrine falcon was slowly hovering around the apartment blocks and seemed view the pigeons' presence dispassionately. But the Peregrine falcon's presence unsettled some of the pigeons, he says, there was a frenzied scampering among them.

After surveying the scene stationed on a window parapet for a few minutes, the Peregrine falcon swept away “towards the open space in the midst of different towers”, its

flight marked by palpable intensity.

When the falcon was gaining elevation, for a fleeting moment Arun got the impression it was leaving the vicinity.

The elevation was being achieved to launch an aerial attack. There was speed, suddenness and flawless execution. Before Arun could realise it, the hunt had been brought to a successful completion. The falcon was in front of him, a pigeon in its talons, before it faded away.

Gnanaskandan Kesavabharathi (GK), who helms Madras Naturalists Society's Project Raptor Watch 2.0, underlines the Peregrine falcon's ability to turn its regular hunting strategy on its head and still pull off an attempt in style.

GK notes that knowing the Peregrine falcon's ability to gain elevation and swoop down on its prey stunning it with speed, some birds would push themselves up and try to soar much higher than the falcon.

In such a scenario, the Peregrine falcon might choose to strike from below, dipping and taking a U-turn upwards and pursue the prey.

## Hunting in tandem



Whatever the vexations that sear the rufous crown of a red necked falcon, an absentee spouse is certainly not one of them. The male and female of this species are co-workers. Truth be told, that description is not spot-on, hardly setting the species apart from most others. To varying degrees, the male and the female in almost every avian species divide the drudge work that goes with raising the young. What makes the red necked falcon a touch better than most other species in this matter is that both the male and the female have teamwork and partnership developed to the nth degree.

The male and female Red necked falcon hunt in tandem with a level of coordination that would make any doubles pair in a racquet sport proud.

Bharath Ravikumar lives in a place wedged between ECR and OMR and is characterised by transmission towers, and also marsh-like patch.

He gets to see a red necked falcon pair up close.

Listen to Bharath: “A Red necked falcon pair have a hunting technique down to art, and it requires simultaneous participation from the male and the female. Sometimes, the female will launch the attack by flushing the birds parked on the ground and directing them to go in a particular direction. The male red necked falcon would be flying parallelly but at a higher elevation, and when these flushed birds have been guided in a particular direction, the male would go for the kill.” There would also be reversal of roles, with the male doing the flushing and the female completing the hunt by going for the kill.

E. Arun Kumar, a resident of House of Hiranandani Upscale in Egattur, OMR who has witnessed this teamwork by a Red necked falcon pair being orchestrated to perfection at Kaveripakkam, notes that this behaviour is well-entrenched in this species.

A Red necked falcon pair in the outskirts; and another pair in the ECR-OMR region. PHOTOS: E. ARUN KUMAR AND BHARATH RAVIKUMAR





Here is why those who have saved a road accident victim could think twice before applying for the Good Samaritan award despite a five-fold increase in its reward money

LIFFY THOMAS

**U**nion Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari recently announced five-fold increase in the reward amount for the “Good Samaritan” scheme.

Launched in 2021, this award is extended to anyone who has saved the life of the road accident victim by administering immediate assistance and rushing the person to a hospital or trauma care centre within the Golden Hour. Currently, an award amount of ₹5,000 is given to the Good Samaritan, which the Minister said would be increased to ₹25,000.

As per reports, the Good Samaritan Award money was given to 80 people until December 2022 according to government data tabled in the Parliament.

*The Hindu Downtown* spoke to a cross-section of NGOs working in the area of road safety and found out the scheme is not popular among most citizens.

The RTO or the traffic police in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred is required to certify the individual as a Good Samaritan and share their details to the Transport Commissioner.

“During our workshops I ask volunteers if they had ever wanted to nominate themselves for the Good Samaritan Award and the response I got was we hand over the accident victim to the ambulance driver and leave the place,” says Karthik Venkatesan, manager - training and public affairs, Alert.

He has not come across any person who has applied or won this recognition since it was started.

Most of the workshops that train

people on giving support during the Golden Hour also covers the Good Samaritan Law. “We encourage participants to come forward to be recognised as a Good Samaritan but there are gaps in the system that put off people. One is required to provide contact details to the doctor, introduce oneself as the one who handed over the victim to the hospital but how many of us have the time to stay till the end,” says Karthik.

Thozhan, another NGO that regularly runs road safety programmes, says none of its volunteers has been nominated for the Good Samaritan Scheme because the reporting format is hugely complicated.

“In a typical case, a first responder would either leave once the ambulance arrives or wait in the hospital till a family member attends to the victim. The Scheme requires verification from a police personnel which puts off many people,” says M. Radhakrishnan, founder of Thozhan.

The Road Transport and High-

## NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH

**Keep it simple**

ways Ministry announced this scheme so that taking a road crash victim to a hospital is not just hassle-free but there is also the incentive of a reward and recognition.

The Ministry’s website has instructions for filling road accident cases and reporting form including particulars such as certification by the police department and by the hospital.

The nomination for the Award is sent by the Transport Department of the State to the Ministry. Thozhan has many volunteers who have helped accident victims but none of them is keen on applying for this Award. “Award is secondary especially when you know there are too many processes to be followed,” says Radhakrishnan, adding that they honour those who have helped accident victims every year during its annual day.

Many NGOs have been working with the government to empower private hospitals to attend to an accident case during the Golden Hour. “Private hospitals do not take accident victims. In many cases, the nearest government hospital is far away which is the reason for increasing fatality rates, so this rule must be relaxed,” says Radhakrishnan.

He says the process to submit the application for the Good Samaritan scheme must be simplified. “A majority of accident victims are taken through 108 Ambulance, so why not empower them to verify a first responder?” asks Radhakrishnan.

NGOs also want the Government to publish names of Good Samaritans on its platforms.

## Other awards

\* Every year, in the month of December, ALERT, a non-profit organisation that empowers people to act effectively during a crisis and save lives, invites nominations for its annual “Alert Being Awards”.

Individuals and organisations that have created an impact through life-saving acts or initiatives can send their nominations to [www.aba.alert.ngo](http://www.aba.alert.ngo)

\* The Cheistha Kochhar Good Samaritan Award is being instituted by Centre for Digital Economy Policy Research (C-DEP.org) in memory of Cheistha Kochhar. The award is being instituted at the behest of Sujit Bhattacharya, a young scholar who wants to use the nudge theory that Cheistha used to work on, to bring about change in society, says a note on the website.

The award will be given annually to those who have contributed to the betterment of society and who have consistently helped fellow humans in need. Deserving candidates may be nominated through C-DEP.org for consideration.

## The hindrance to offering help

**A**ccording to a study titled “Exploring the obstacles preventing good samaritans’ attending to the road crash victims: A case of a developing nation”, legal harassment, the bystander effect, fear of bloodshed, lack of altruism, and knowledge deficits are among obstacles hindering Good Samaritan behaviour.

The authors - Aditya Saxena from Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay and Binayak Choudhury from School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal - surveyed 551 respondents to bring out the study published on Sciencedirect.

According to the World Health Organisation, during a road crash, bystanders can save lives in situations where established emergency medical services are not available. They can administer first-aid to the injured and even rush them to the nearest hospital.

The report also notes that there is no study in India that looks into the role of Good Samaritans in road crash incidents.

The study points out that there is a pressing need for public awareness campaigns to educate people about their legal rights and protections as Good Samaritans. Besides, efforts should be directed towards enhancing education and training programmes, particularly targeting individuals with lower levels of education and income.







▼  
The prize distribution ceremony.

## Rap battle showcases literary innovation

**A**s part of *The Hindu* Lit for Life, a dynamic rap battle finale was hosted on January 12 at Brigade Xanadu, featuring finalists selected from over 100 entries.

Rappers performed in Tamil and English, delivering impressive lyrical skill and energy that captivated the audience. The event offered a vibrant

platform for emerging artistes to showcase their talent, celebrating the evolving art form of rap within the literary space.

**Judges:** Jords, a British singer and rapper for English; Senthuzhan, rapper for Tamil

The rap battle contest was curated by Catalyst 28. The rap beats by Gurumarx from Catalyst 28.

## Lifetime achievement awards to be presented

Rotary International District 3233 will present lifetime achievement awards to the following distinguished personalities for their outstanding contributions to society. N. Murali, Director of *The Hindu* and President of The Music Academy; V. Kamakoti, Director of IIT Madras; N. M. Veeraiyan, Chancellor of Saveetha University; Major General M. Indrabalan (Retd.). The awards will be conferred by Justice V. Lakshminarayanan, Judge, Madras High Court, on January 25 at 6 p.m. at Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall, Lady Andal School Premises, Harrington Road, Chetpet according to S.Mahaveer Chand Bothra, Rotary District Governor 3233.

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## TIMESNOW.in Academic Excellence Awards 2025 Tamil Nadu

### TN Schools, Pre Schools and Education Institutions Survey 2025

The TIMESNOW.in Academic Excellence Awards 2025 event was held on January 10, 2025, at Chennai. This prestigious occasion celebrated the outstanding achievements of schools, preschools, and educational institutions for their exceptional efforts during the 2024-25 academic year. The event was proudly presented by Shrimathi Devkunvar Nanalal Bhatt Vaishnav College For Women, Chennai with the awards ceremony graced by the esteemed Chief Guest, Mary Kom, who felicitated the winners.



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NOTE : The current rating is included in the Timesnow.in Education Survey published on 12th January 2025, which also provides a comprehensive methodology. For a deeper understanding, please refer to the full survey report.



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