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AN ECO-FRIENDLY UPGRADE

The next time you visit the Marina Beach, make sure you take shelter under the shade of bamboo umbrella. Other bamboo-based craft works with utilitarian value are in the works **P2**



A BITTER PILL

Those who cannot head to the hills and escape Chennai's punishing summer will have to take a slew of precautionary measures which include greater attention to the medicine cabinet, say city doctors **P6**

View of Kesavaperumal West Street, then and now. PHOTOS: SRINATH M



From hard rubber mats to *paver blocks*

An old rainwater harvesting system at Kesavaperumal West Street in Mylapore has been replaced; residents hope the new system receives the maintenance that the old one was denied

SRINATH M

On Kesavaperumal West Street in Mylapore, a rainwater harvesting provision was extremely effective till the time it lasted.

It consisted of open extra hard plastic mats that sat on loose gravel, which resulted in immediate drainage and efficient percolation of rainwater into the ground.

As reported by residents, the rainwater harvesting system was effective over the last four years, despite being marred by poor maintenance. Due to lack of care, the rubber mats were covered with earth.



Where the rubber mats were, paver blocks with the borders sealed with cement are now found. Rainwater percolation points have been created at regular intervals.

Though paver blocks make for easier maintenance

now, residents are sceptical about the new system's ability to absorb water. They hope the paver blocks based system receives the maintenance that was denied to rainwater harvesting previous system.

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Bamboo-based craft works in the process of being made, at Marina Beach.

PHOTOS : S.HARINI



An eco-friendly move

The next time you visit the Marina Beach make sure you take shelter under the shade of a bamboo umbrella. Other bamboo-based craft works with utilitarian value are in the works

S. HARINI

Marina Beach is turning green. On May 14, during a visit to the shores of the beach near Anna Swimming Pool, over a dozen people were at work. Men were busy splitting bamboo logs and making strips to make dustbins, clock towers, sofas and recliners.

This eco-friendly transformation is being carried out to meet Blue Flag certification standards. The project falls under the Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE) initiative, supported by the World Bank.

A team of 14 workers from My Bamboos, a firm based in Assam and led by Mahibur Rahaman, has been on-site from April to execute their first government project in Tamil Nadu.

Raj Kannan, a frequent beach-goer, said the bamboo umbrellas and recliners will be a welcome addition. "Visiting Marina Beach during the afternoon is not a great idea; there is barely any place with shade to sit. These bamboo shelters will help people to relax and enjoy the sea from the central spots along the shore," he said.

Venkatraman, who is from Vellore is visiting the beach with his family, said the improvements will help tourists. "Not everyone can stay late in the evening to en-

joy the beach. For those arriving in the afternoon, these additions offer a chance to rest and spend quality time with family before heading back," he said.

According to G.O. dated September 19, 2024, issued by Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), bamboo-based installations include 20 umbrellas, 40 recliners, 50 dustbins, 12 sofas, and four elevated watch towers. Additionally, two washrooms for men and one for women will be built with bamboo-covered container walls, said the note.

Marina Beach was selected for the Blue Flag certification after meeting 33 stringent criteria set by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). These include standards in water quality, environmental management, environmental education and safety. The certification is a globally recognised eco-label awarded to clean, safe, and environmentally responsible beaches, adds the note.



ON THE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE: CONTRASTING PICTURES



▼ The building at the junction of Dams Road and Mount Road where the pharmacy store J.F. Letoille is located has elements redolent of a past architectural style -- but only on the inside, and that too here and there. This building which houses many commercial units including Geetha Cafe has undergone sufficient changes to sport a somewhat contemporary look on the outside. The portion housing this famous pharmacy with a French name continues to latch on to old-style structural features and design, as these images from April 24, 2025 show. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



▼ On Mount Road, a noticeably old building, one sandwiched between two swanky showrooms (Kadim's and Elite Toyota), beckons passers-by with a repetitive flick of the index finger. With architecture harking back to a distant time, it gets the attention it seeks. Its heritage look however conceals a "cavern of modernity". Right behind the facade, are businesses, including Manapuram Finance, that operate from swank spaces, which one can access by taking a winding stairway. The image was taken April 24, 2025. PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

A new work space and a sense of dignity



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Yein Udaan's has just opened its account in terms of its office space; that should strike anyone familiar with Yein Udaan's work, but unaware of its workaday realities, as hugely surprising. The non-profit which works with underprivileged children in Chetpet, providing them with a structured after-class learning programme, is eight years old.

In all these years, the staff – teaching, administrative and housekeeping – have been operating from a borrowed space, space "borrowed" from the children they are serving.

The classrooms at the after-school facility would double as office spaces.

Says Vedika Agarwal, founder of Yein Udaan:

"This is our first office actually in eight years. Until now, our team was sharing classroom space with the children as we were investing all donations into the programmes. However, now as our team has grown to 28 members-strong, we needed a dedicated space for us to convene, plan, focus and work. Our presence had also begun disturbing the students. Thus we made the decision to move to a dedicated office workspace."

The walls at the office sport hand-painted artworks (done by findart team) that provide a peek into the processes and the philosophy driving the work at Yein Udaan.

"The artwork curated around the office is a commemoration of Chetpet, its people and history," notes Vedika.

Carrying a degree of swankiness and creativity, the new office space is impressing visitors, and staff even more.

Vedika explains: "We are immensely proud of this as we look at it not only as an achievement of establishing a strong organisation with a stable team but also because the space is curated as one aimed at the empowerment for our all-women team. Of 28 of us, 24 are from the low income community in Chetpet that we serve, thus for them to have an office to call their own – one in which they are not maids but formal workforce, is truly a milestone."

She adds: "It is located in Chetpet only for ease of access for the team & relevance – to be rooted where we have our impact."

GCC's painting project aims to honour Vyasarpadi residents



At Basin Bridge flyover in Vyasarpadi. PHOTO: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

of the Indian Revenue Service; V. Dillibabu, a scientist at the Defence Research & Development Organisation; football champion S Nandhakumar; carrom champion Khazima M. Basha, and retired Police Inspector Prakash.

The list also includes women advocates hailing from underprivileged sections of society and known for breaking the glass ceiling. Among the artists are Sudhan popularly known as DJ Black and Isaivaani. The flyover falls under Ward 46 of Zone 4 - Tondiarpet of the Greater Chennai Corporation.

"This idea is to motivate and inspire the youngsters of Vyasarpadi to excel in their chosen field and also to prevent them from falling into bad ways," says a GCC official.

Greater Chennai Corporation is painting the pillars of the Basin Bridge flyover with images of renowned residents of Vyasarpadi.

The following are among the prominent personalities chosen by GCC to adorn the flyover: posthumous recipient of the Padma Shri Award physician Dr. V. Thiruvengadam fondly known as "Five Rupee Doctor"; V. Nandakumar, an officer

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

A green wedding is not different from a regular wedding; it does the regular things differently. The idioms of the ritual continue but in rephrased forms. Here is how Amrutha Pragasam ensured hers read different and green.

Souvenirs to attendees: jute bags free of wording to enable their re-use.

Invitations: handmade invites on recycled waste paper, done by Amrutha from the scratch.

Bridal attire: no fast fashion; a sari bought directly from the weaver to benefit them; jewellery, some rented and some borrowed.

The rest of the green wedding read: no flexes, foam boards, plastic flowers or bottled water; a bouquet made from waste scrap; steel cups; bagasse plates.

Amrutha's wedding was going to be green by default. Sustainability-minded, Amrutha had thought of such a wedding for herself long before "green weddings" became trendy hashtags. A fashion designer currently pursuing a PhD on sustainable fashion from National Institute of Fashion Technology, she runs a non-profit, Rhapsodeed that sells second hand items, sustainably made, and handmade lifestyle products. With the profits and fundraisers, Rhapsodeed gives a leg-up to the unprivileged to start small ventures of their own.



This section spotlights initiatives undertaken by residents of Chennai to minimise the waste that reaches landfills

Amrutha had a vision of an eco-friendly wedding, but had to successfully impress that mental picture upon those travelling alongside her – her family, her fiancé and his own – so they owned that vision too, at least respected it.

She received a nod, a whole-hearted one, from Ashwin Pratap, then fiancé now husband.

"His values just naturally synced with mine. I did not have to convince him." The convincing part entered the equation when the families were in the picture.

"Initially, they thought it was unnecessary, but they came around eventually."

In the early days of wedding preparation, when the nod was yet



to come forth, she handcrafted the invites with waste paper, at home, hidden from sceptical eyes. "I sat for a whole week, crafting them one by one. My products had to be moved into another room so I could work in secret."

And the two families found themselves being congratulatory about Amrutha's efforts.

There was however a challenge and it came from an unexpected quarter: given the logistical difficulties, the marriage hall management panicked, and it took a whisper of reassurance from Namma Ooru Foundation, which handled the organic waste, to bring them back on board.

A takeaway: in Amrutha's words, "It is funny – even when you reduce décor, the prices do not drop. You have to negotiate every detail." It might cost more, but is worth it, as it would cost the planet a little less.

'Better late than landfill'

Uma Ram picked up the green baton late in the day, but ran her feet off to complete the run on time and with impact. Only the day before the reception did she manage to sign a service provider on – Connect To Bhoomi (an organisation focused on promoting and practising sustainability by educating clients on the responsible use of natural resources) – that could deal with the waste generated from the wedding.

"But better late than landfill," quips Uma, a digital

While tying the knot, they loosened a burden weighing on the planet. In the light of World Family Day (May 15), let us invite ourselves, retrospectively, to two weddings in Chennai that in recent times achieved online virality for their minimal-waste underpinnings. In both weddings, the bride called the green shots

Green beginnings



Snapshots of the two weddings.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



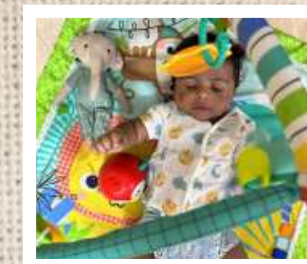
content creator. Waste management: Water bottles had already been ordered, and the caterers were asked to work with Connect To Bhoomi to ensure their proper disposal. Banana leaves replaced plates; leftover fruits were fed to cows after a vet's approval; and flowers were composted carefully. "Not all flowers are eco-friendly – some are dyed and can harm the soil. It was a real eye-opener," she admits. Invitation: seed-paper invites came from Iniyawai. Bridal attire: Uma chose to wear her grandmother's 50-year-old sari instead of buying new. "Why buy new when heritage fits like a glove?" Uma asks. Truth be told, her first choice was a 90-year-old silver Banarasi sari; as it could not be restored, she went in for the less-aged alternative. Transportation: two buses booked to bring relatives together. "Less carbon footprint, more family footprint," she smiles. If Uma had had her way in the first place, the process could have been easier than it was.

"Ever since college, I have noticed how weddings waste so much – especially water and food. It always left a bad taste," she says. Uma's dream was a no-frills wedding at a quiet temple or at the marriage registrar's office. But, the bride and the groom being first-borns, both families wanted a grand wedding. Persuading vendors and the staff at the marriage hall to toe the sustainability line took some doing. "Some argued, 'Why separate waste? It is easier to throw everything in one bin.' It took patience and a lot of explaining," Uma recalls.

Her husband Srinivas was in the dark about the wedding's green focus until after the wedding when he saw the segregated waste. "He told me, 'I'm so proud of you. You have pulled off something incredible,'" Uma beams. A takeaway: "Sustainable weddings are not about spending more; they are about spending smart," Uma remarks. And guests being inspired to follow in her footsteps is the reward.



From the green baby shower; and (right) Dev.



Witnessing sustainability from the cradle

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

Dev Chigurupati Prince is 1.5 years old or thereabouts. With some more passage of time, when he is old enough to demand bedtime stories, his mother Chigurupati Anjani would indulge him with one rare bedtime story, a story that has not emerged from a fertile pen, is real and continues to be lived, with many sequels to follow.

It is a story where none other than little Dev himself "plays" the central role. This story in fact began before Dev was born and it featured him even then.

When Anjani was carrying Dev, she had a green baby shower on October 15, 2023, organised at St. Mark's Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Chromepet.

Ever since he was born, Dev has taken pitter-patter steps across a sustainability landscape, travelling alongside his mother and father, Blessing Samuel Prince.

"The swing that he used for four months is a hand-me-down," says Anjani.

For the first one year since Dev's birth, the parents celebrated a monthly milestone, planting at least one tree on the day he would turn a month older. The diaper being used is a Super Bottom cloth diaper. The sight of used diapers on roads disturbs Anjani. One of her early decisions for Dev was to avoid disposable diapers. "We see diapers scattered on roads, sometimes torn apart by stray dogs. I did not want to be part of that. It became a priority not to contribute to that kind of waste." While cloth diapers require extra effort, especially while travelling, Anjani found the added work worth it. "You need to clean, pack and wash them – even at restaurant stops – but it is a choice I

made for the environment and animals. In the first year and a half, it is mostly about diapers. That is the main area where I tried to be mindful."

Anjani and her husband are also careful about the toys and clothes they buy for Dev. The play gym was purchased from a second-hand store called @shoptwicetreasured on Instagram.

"We prefer wooden toys, especially locally sourced ones, and avoid shopping online where possible." She adds, "We try not to buy plastic toys. Thankfully, he is more into books, so we focus on buying books and only a few toys." For clothing, she turned to traditional practices. "For his clothing, during the first year, we stitched his clothes using leftover blouse fabric from saris." She also made jhablas and other small clothes using soft cotton fabric available at home.

Even travel is planned with intention. Anjani carries her son's cutlery and food, including *sathu maavu* powder. Resorts have become easier to manage now, but she was very particular about what Dev ate during the early months. There are also certain baby products Anjani chooses not to buy. "We avoid moisturisers, body washes, and commercial laundry liquids." For washing his clothes, she uses a bioenzyme-based liquid called Sukizyme, recommended by Kavitha Sivakumar from Namma Ooru Foundation. "It has a mild fragrance to mask strong odours." She has begun introducing sustainability concepts to Dev. "He has learned to segregate waste using blue and green bins." She notes he already knows which waste goes where and is comfortable participating in the process.

WHO's road safety toolkit aligns with CUMTA's mobility plan, says Bicycle Mayor of Chennai

Felix John presents his wish list, which includes the creation of an "Active Mobility Cell" for walking and cycling in Chennai; and more community volunteering efforts to make the city safer for users of non-motorised transport

LIFFY THOMAS

Institutions and municipal bodies seeking to promote non-motorised forms of transport with a girding of safety now have a guiding light – "Make Walking and Cycling Safe", launched by the World Health Organisation at the Eighth United Nations Global Road Safety Week (May 12 to 18).

Designed for policy makers, governments, civil society organisations, private sector, and other stakeholders in planning, implementing, and evaluating efforts in integrating walking and cycling into transport, health, environmental and education policies, the toolkit calls for bold action in promoting safe road use through public awareness and behaviour change campaigns.

It features case studies to showcase real-world examples of how these policy options are being successfully put into practice.

Felix John, Bicycle Mayor of Chennai, says the toolkit aligns perfectly with the "Comprehensive Mobility Plan" being readied by Chennai Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority

(CUMTA). "By putting safety and accessibility in the forefront, it gives legitimacy to community efforts," says John, an advocate for active mobility.

The toolkit can guide CUMTA, CMDA, GCC, GTP to enforce safer speed limits, create calming infrastructure at school zones and protect cycling and walking infrastructure. "While we have seen efforts by civil society organisations and the local body to promote non-motorised form of transport, there is always more credibility when WHO collaborates for this initiative," says John.

John says Chennai is one of the first states to launch the Non-Motorised Transport Policy, when it did so in 2014 with the help of ITDP. "We have a policy but not much emphasis is being placed on implementation or adoption. Priority is being given to a vehicle-centric approach," says John.

John Felix's wish list includes creation of an "Active Mobility Cell" for walking and cycling in Chennai. "More community volunteers should be invited to be part of efforts to make the city safer for non-motorised transport," adds John.



Cyclists on Swami Sivananda Salai. PHOTO: R RAGU

A bitter pill

Those who cannot head to the hills and escape Chennai's punishing summer will have to take a slew of precautionary measures which include greater attention to the medicine cabinet, say city doctors



LIFFY THOMAS

Maria Aruna notes this summer has been extremely cruel to her 87-year-old father, disrupting his routine. His typical day involves being picked up from his home in Mylapore around 9 a.m. in a van, which makes multiple stops to board other seniors en route to Dignity Foundation's Dementia Day Care Centre in Anna Nagar.

The summer heat is adding to the discomfort of a long commute and taking a toll on this octogenarian with dementia. "Dad had loose stools, so I did not send him to the day care centre for a week; I fear the heat and the travel would drain him further," says the school teacher, who also had a tele-consultation with the doctor.

High temperature can impact seniors (or anybody else) in another critical manner. Doctors point out high temperature and humidity can affect the efficacy of medicines.

Venkatraman Karthikeyan, senior consultant neurologist with Kauvery Group of Hospitals, feels that those with multiple sclerosis are the most affected by summer heat.

"When I was running my clinic in Liverpool, the Brits would leave for Scandinavian countries during summer. They could not tolerate the heat. There would be 'reproduction' of all their symptoms. It is not a relapse but we term it as pseudo-relapse because of the heat around. The affected neurons will not be able to compensate when the heat is high. This is particularly a problem for those diagnosed

with multiple sclerosis living in cities where humidity is high," says Dr. Karthikeyan.

As heat-related fatigue can be hard on seniors, particularly those with such ailments, Dr. Karthikeyan has a word of advice for them: he asks them to "reserve their energy for the most important and productive work".

For example, watching television does not equate with resting. "People think brain becomes tired only while working but brain becomes super tired more with cognitive work than physical work. So I would ask them to cut down on such activities and take a quick nap," he says.

Medicines and dehydration

Sridhar Vaitheswaran, consultant psychiatrist, Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF), says some medication can amplify the risk related to heat and summer – dehydration.

"While some medicines can make our body deal with dehydration, there are some others that can exacerbate the condition. There are a few medicines that can increase sweating as well. Some of the medicines used for high blood pressure and heart disease would also make the body lose water. It is important that the patient and the caregiver are aware of these problems and the medicines that can cause them; the physician needs to explain these things to them," says Dr. Vaitheswaran.

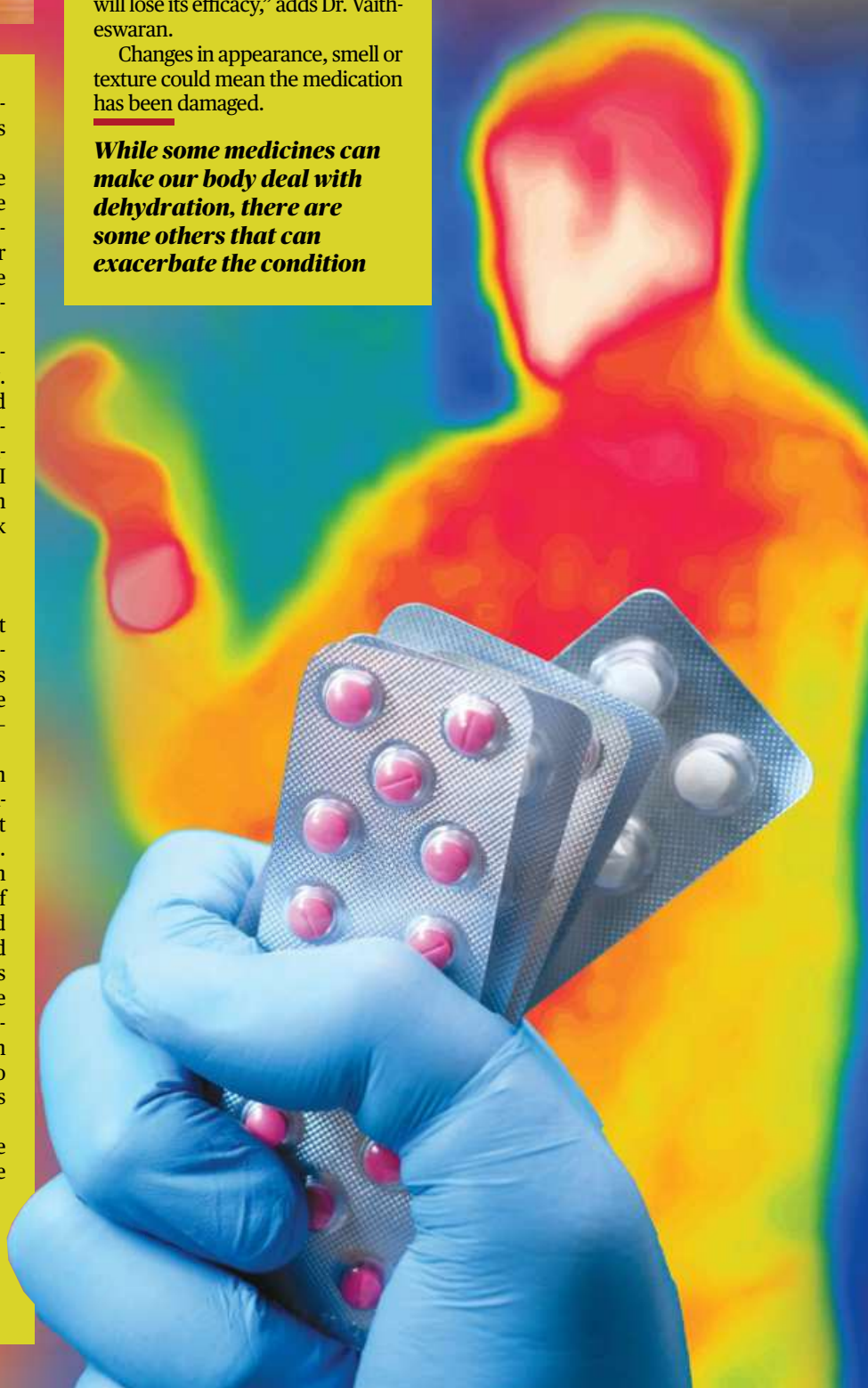
"The dosage of some of the medicines might have to be changed depending on the timing of the dose and how it causes those problems. Some medicines such as Lithium, which we prescribe for bi-polar disorder,

can sometimes act up so we have to be careful," says Dr. Vaitheswaran.

Doctors say it is important to follow the instructions mentioned on the back of the tablet box or strip while storing medicines. Drugs should not be exposed to direct sunlight or left in cars for hours together anytime – more so, during summer. "Certain tablets when kept under direct sunlight will lose its efficacy," adds Dr. Vaitheswaran.

Changes in appearance, smell or texture could mean the medication has been damaged.

While some medicines can make our body deal with dehydration, there are some others that can exacerbate the condition



PLAN YOUR WEEK

Storytelling workshop from May 20

Tale 'O' meter, a creative platform for mindful entertainment, presents "Solla Vaa", a storytelling workshop for children aged 8 to 13. The event will be held from May 20 to 24 in RA Puram, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Solla Vaa—which means "Come, Speak" in Tamil goes beyond just writing stories. It encourages children to bring their stories to life through voice, expression, and performance. The workshop is bilingual (Tamil & English) and offers an engaging blend of writing, mentoring, vocal training, and studio recording, all culminating in a final showcase of original short stories.

This workshop promises a hands-on, skill-building, and confidence-boosting experience for kids who love stories and performance.

To register, email tale.o.meter@gmail.com

Carnatic vocal programme

The Triplicane cultural academy is organising a special Carnatic vocal programme in connection with the 250th birth anniversary of Nadayogi Mudduswamy Dikshithar.

Vivek Sadasivam accompanied by B. Ananthakrishnan and Ganapathyraman will present the kritis of Nadayogi Muduswamy Dikshithar. The programme will be held on May 18 at 6.15 p.m. at Raga Sudha Hall, Luz (Near Nageswara Rao Park).

All are welcome.



Culinary workshops

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a culinary workshop on May 22 and 23. The session on May 23 focuses on preparation of flavour powders that could be added in vegetarian and non-vegetarian cuisines. And preparation of sweets and savouries will be demonstrated on May 23. The workshops will be held at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044 - 29530048

Value education programme for children

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has launched a weekly value education programme for children and teens. It is designed to nurture spiritual and moral values in young minds through fun-filled sessions. Participants also benefit from improved concentration and memory power, said a release. The programme (English and Tamil) will be conducted at multiple locations in Chennai as well as can be attended virtually.

Children (ages 6-12) will learn through stories, quizzes, shlokas, bhajans, fireless cooking, art and craft. Teens will be engaged in stimulating theme-based stories, debates, group discussions, mind mapping, and JAM (Just A Minute) sessions. Course materials, including videos, PDFs, and presentations, will be delivered via Google Classroom. Upon successful completion, all participants will be awarded a certificate, added the release.

For registration, visit www.iskconchennai.org/bpps. Or call 8072599295.

Awareness programme on BP today

World Hypertension League and Tamil Nadu State Chapter of the Indian Society of Hypertension are conducting a public awareness programme on 'High Blood Pressure' on May 18.

A free screening for high blood pressure and fasting blood glucose will be held from 7.30 to 9.30 a.m., followed by public interaction from 10 a.m. on 'Hypertension with a focus on activities of the World Hypertension League'

The programme will be held at Chettinad Vidyashram auditorium, Kumararaja Muthiah Hall, MRC Nagar.

The public are requested to enter the auditorium through gate number 5.

A proud moment



Over 200 participants competed in a series of engaging and entertaining activities tailored for moms and their little ones as part of 12th edition of Chennai Super Mom 2025. The event was organised by Iris Events at Ampa Skyone Mall in Aminjikarai. Some of the events included 'Mother and Child Fashion Show', 'Mom Junction', 'Culinary Queen' and a debate on gentle parenting. One of the winning teams is in the picture

Panel discussion on high risk pregnancy conducted

The Obstetric & Gynaecological Society of Southern India (OGSSI) celebrated Mother's day on Sunday, 11th May, by conducting a CME on high risk pregnancy.

Senior doctors from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have participated in the knowledge sharing sessions, which included panel discussions. Postgraduates who attended the session benefited largely.

Consultant Obstetrician and Gynecologist Hema Divakar from Bengaluru was the chief guest of the summit. The programme was organised by Sampath Kumari. S, president of OGSSI and M.Meena, secretary of OGSSI



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PRINCE FREDERICK

Recreating the world in their own image is an irresistible temptation for human kind. Imparting human characteristics to animals is a subset of this inclination. Considering its usefulness in elucidating moral instructions (recall "Aesop's Fables"), this usually turns out to be the best temptation that human kind ever yielded to. There is however a yawning chasm, wider than Australia's Capartee Valley, between fable-ism and anthropomorphism.

Fable-ism does not for a second pretend that the animal-characters possess any of the human characteristics they portray in the fables. Anthropomorphism is a wholly different kettle of fish: it might compare human and animal behaviours, suggesting the species in question mirrors a specific human trait. For example, the male jacana attending to child-rearing duties can be presented as a mirror image of men exemplifying fatherly commitment.

The human mind can create points of convergence in this manner, and here is one more born out of an entirely anthropomorphic viewpoint. The belligerence and resilience of the Black winged stilt as a "householder". And why is this example of anthropomorphism massively irresistible? Because it mirrors the extent human parents – at least, a majority of them – would go to protect the little home they create and raise.

At the end of the wintering season, when Perumbakkam wetland dries up, images of belligerent Black winged stilts guarding the stones they had marked for nesting are inevitable. Never mind that their res-

The 'angry' Black winged stilt

From April to August, when these long-legged birds nest and breed, it is difficult not to resort to anthropomorphism while making sense of their behaviours related to defending their nests and young ones



▼ A nesting Black winged stilt flying into a rage at the sight of intrusive steps, in Thaiyur near Kelambakkam; and (right) a Black winged stilt pair at their nesting site in Perumbakkam wetland.
PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

ponse to the danger (usually more of a perception than a reality) would be disproportionate to the threat.

These stones are a boon to the Black winged stilt, and around April, they are prompt in taking possession of them, as these images from Perumbakkam wetland on April 10 and 13, 2025 as also the one from Thaiyur near Kelambakkam taken on April 29, 2025 illustrate. The black-winged stilts' breeding season falls in the April to August time band.

Where they do not find stones such as these parked in shallow waters, nesting Black winged stilts – both male and female working shoulder to shoulder (pectoral girdle to pectoral girdle, to be more accurate) – would create mounds by shovelling earth and even decaying plant material to make their nests.

Equally inevitably, showers, some out-of-season and the others according to the dictates of the rain chart (usually those from South West monsoon), might submerge

these stones, dashing these birds' efforts to raise a family. This year, the downpour on April 16 set the Black winged stilts' plans back a wee bit, and in characteristic style, they resumed nesting effort after the water receded again.

Time and again, one has seen this scene play out. After the water drains and the stones re-emerge, they would be at it again, making another attempt at nesting. In these times, this beanpole of a bird is the picture of resilience, illustrating the power of stick-to-itiveness.

WhatsApp ticketing offered by CMRL

Chennai Metro Rail Limited has introduced WhatsApp ticketing. Commuters can now purchase tickets through WhatsApp using the WhatsApp chatbot 8300086000. Other on-line ticketing options, including StaticQR Code, CMRL mobile app, Paytm, and PhonePe, are also available. Commuters can buy tickets at counters and using the Singara Chennai Card and Travel Card.

Changes in electric train services

The Southern Railway, Chennai Division, has announced changes in the pattern of train services (Engineering work, line and signal block) in the Chennai Central and Arakkonam sections at Avadi yard. Consequently, the following are the changes in the pattern of electrical multiple units and main-line electrical multiple units.

Train No: 66007, Moore Market Complex - Avadi at 11:40 p.m. is cancelled on May 19.

Train No: 43001, Moore Market Complex - Avadi at 00:15 a.m. is cancelled on May 20.

Partial cancellation

Train No: 43126, Pattabiram Military Siding–Moore Market Complex, at 19:35 p.m., is partially cancelled between Avadi and Moore Market Complex, and Train No: 66032, Sullurupeeta–Moore Market Complex MEMU passenger, at 21 p.m., is partially cancelled between Korrukupet and Moore Market Complex on May 19.

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