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### OMR360: STRIKING A CHORD AND A BOARD

The carrom and music competitions were keenly fought and witnessed enthusiastic participation of cheer groups. **P4**



### LUNCHING OUT AT THE LIBRARY

The Directorate of Public Libraries has enjoined branch libraries to make students preparing for competitive exams feel at home; the library in Periyar Nagar has earned the admiration of the wider community for how it honoured that injunction. **P6**



## MTC invites applications for fellowship programme

**A**re you passionate about public transport and want to make a difference? Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) invites applications for the Chennai Fellowship Programme.

Selected applicants should research about best practices in public transport, analyse data and translate findings into actionable insights. They would also have to propose new initiatives, collaborate with stakeholders to identify and implement technology solutions and assist in project planning, execution and stakeholder engagement, said a re-

lease. The one-year fellowship programme offers a chance to shape the city's public transport system in a collaborative and fast-paced environment, with a stipend of ₹50,000 per month.

One must have a Master's degree in Urban and Transport Planning, Urban Engineering or a related field, with one or two years of experience in the public transport sector. Problem-solving, communication, organisational skills and passion for urban mobility will be an advantage.

For details, log on to <https://bit.ly/mtcfellowship>.

## When these Velachery residents squirmed with discomfort



▼ A fortnight ago, residents of Regal Palm Garden in Velachery were squirming with discomfort at sight of water cup. There were unwelcome visitors in there -- squirming worms, tiny nevertheless big enough for the naked eye to pick up.

Between July 20 and 22, complains of this nature were flying into the office of the Regal Palm Garden Apartment Owners Association (RPGAOA), says its secretary Ahalya Kumari. The drinking water was muddy, smelly and infested with these worms, recalls Ahalya, adding that prior to these complaints, worms being found in noticeable numbers, for one and a half months, the water had been smelly.

"On July 22, a complaint was raised with the local CMWSSB depot. They said they would have to repair certain pipelines. They said they had looked into the issue in the supply line and addressed it and asked us to clean the sump. When the repairs were being carried out by CMWSSB we were buying tanker water. Though the issue seemed to have been settled, we are still keeping an eye on it and our fingers crossed. For, on July 28, there was an isolated complaint from one household in a block of three worms in the water in the line to the bathroom," says Ahalya, remarking that they hope the issue has been decisively addressed.

Regal Palm Garden has 412 units spread across 10 blocks.

PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK & SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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## Taramani Link Road: remove rundown rumble strips, construct speed breaker



At Taramani Link Road on July 26, 2024. Photo: Prince Frederick

**T**he rumble strips on Taramani Link Road (for traffic towards OMR), just after the American School campus, have the look of a bone chomped on by a pup with edgy teeth.

Scraps of the rumble strips are being moved out of place by rolling wheels. These rumble strips' days are numbered. Traffic planners can make those days shorter still by removing whatever remains of the

rumble strips – glaringly non-performing now – and construct a speed breaker with sufficient markings. Vehicles do move at a clip at most hours of the day and night on that section of Taramani Link Road, necessitating a speed breaker.

The role of rumble strips on roads within city limits is open to discussion. In recent times, road safety advocates across Indian ci-

ties are highlighting the “after-shock” of the vibration-and-sound-making rumble strips.

These activists point out these rumble strips rattle not just wheels but also motorcyclists' spine. Besides, they argue, the Indian Road Congress does not prescribe rumble strips for city roads where the volume of vehicles keeps a check on their speed.

Glaringly out of place



Rice Mill Road in Jalladianpet sports rumble strips a short distance ahead of the point where it meets Velachery Main Road. These rumble strips are out of place, not just due to the fact that presence of rumble strips on roads well within city limits can be questioned. For the volume of vehicles it takes in, this road is considerably narrow and vehicular movement is often up against “blocks” caused by oncoming traffic. Rumble strips are clearly not needed on account of this scenario too. They achieve little more than placing an unnecessary stress on motorcyclists. A speed breaker will do and is a better option. Image was taken on August 2, 2024. Photo: Prince Frederick

## School celebrates third annual day



**K**.S.N. Senior Secondary School, Thiruvannmiyur, celebrated its third annual day function with great enthusiasm, showcasing the talents and achievements of its students. The event was held on July 25, 2024 at The Music Academy. Among the participants were the managing trustee of Indian Education Trust N. Kumar and other trust members, including the chief guest Justice V. Ramasubramanian, former Judge, Supreme Court of India, who delivered a motivational keynote address. The programme commenced with a welcome address by school principal V. Sridhar, followed by a presentation of the annual report and a series of cultural performances, including music, dance and drama presentations. There was felicitation of the students who excelled in the academics.

Aadi sale in Thiruvannmiyur

In view of Aadi festival, Cotton House has come up with a discount on its products. The collection includes saris, skirts and Lehenga and other suits. The shop is at No: 68, LB Road, Thiruvannmiyur. For details, call 044 - 24454442/9176444440

## MTC to operate additional buses

In view of the maintenance work at Tambaram railway station and the subsequent cancellation of suburban train services from Chennai Beach to Tambaram and Chengalpattu, the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) will operate additional buses until Au-

gust 14. From the Pallavaram bus stop, MTC will operate an additional 30 buses to Chengalpattu and 20 buses to Guduvancherry.

The transport corporation will also operate an additional 20 buses from Tambaram (West) to T. Nagar and Broadway.

Further, according to a release from MTC, to avoid traffic congestion in the Tambaram (West) region on GST Road, MTC will halt buses plying towards the Chengalpattu and Guduvancherry regions, at The Hindu Mission Hospital halting point.

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## OMR360: striking a chord and a board

The carrom and music competitions were keenly fought and witnessed enthusiastic participation of cheer groups

HARSHA KODA

**T**he OMR communities gathered at Appaswamy Splendour in Semmancheri for an exciting carrom tournament last Saturday. Participants of all ages showcased their skills in a friendly yet competitive atmosphere. The event drew over 55 teams besides enthusiastic spectators and families supporting the players.

The matches up to the quarter final were held in a knockout format. Since the knockout format would see the losing players out of the competition, all the participants took careful moves while playing.

The men's event saw the teams from Jains Pebble Brook, Prestige Courtyards and Vaikund Sundaram taking the top three honours, while in the women's event, Jains Pebble Brook took the top spot once again and teams from Sobha Meritta and Hiranandani took the

next two. Many of the top players also contested in mixed doubles and this was a tough fight with Prestige Courtyards, Bhaggyam Athulya and The Central Park, South finally coming out as the top three.

### Music festival

The weekend's excitement continued with a vibrant music fest held at the Janaki Ammal Auditorium at APL Global School on Sunday. The event featured a diverse line-up of groups and solo artists, providing a musical treat for all tastes. From rock and jazz to classical and pop, old to new songs in all languages, the festival had something for everyone.

For the jury, FOMRRA approached two celebrities who have both excelled in their own genres of music – Shalini Singh (celebrated as Pop Shalini) who has over 5000 songs in 14 languages to her name, and Viswanath Parasuram, a classical vocalist and mridangist

who along with his brothers Sriram and Narayan has a group called 3 Brothers & A Violin. Both judges were pleasantly surprised at the quality of talent that was on show from the citizens of OMR. "We really did not expect this range of musical talent. Some of the soloists and groups that performed here were really good, given that most of them were not even professionally trained" said the judges as they presented the awards.

Potramarai from Prestige Courtyards, Inzamam Ul Huq from Bhaggyam Athulya and Manoj Prasanna from Prestige Courtyards took the top three spots in the solo event. Aruna Guhanand's team from Bollineni Hillside took the top spot in the group event while Hemalatha and friends from Pacifica Aurum and Sivakumar's group from Prestige Courtyards took the next two spots.

### Table tennis tourney

This week's community table tennis

tournament is being held at Vaikund Sundaram, Karapakkam. Yesterday was a spectacle of boys, girls, men and adults over 50 years of age, followed by today's tournament of women's table tennis doubles. With over 50 participants, the event has been featuring exciting matches.

### Style, stage and solutions

On August 10, Emami Tejomaya will host a fashion design and modelling competition for OMR residents. The contest will help individual designers and fashion models showcase their ability to blend tradition with latest trends in fashion and designing. While individual designers get to showcase their costuming skills, team performers can take to the catwalk to showcase their modelling skills. On August 11, Janaki Ammal Auditorium will once again host a very interesting theatre competition for OMR residents. Solo performers can showcase a dramatic monologue, stand-up comedy, poignant piece of writing, or tragic melodrama and share it in their unique voice and perspective with the audience. Group performances can perform original works or adaptations of existing material.

Registration for both these events closes on August 7. The final event will be conducted on August 10. More details are available on @omr360event on all major social

media networks.

Presenting the inter-school problem-solving competition – SOLVE (which stands for 'Simplifying Our Lives Via Effective Innovative Techniques'). Students of OMR schools will research, analyse, and recommend a strategic plan to overcome four problems of OMR – traffic congestion, pollution, waste and sewage management, water management – to the jury on 11 August. They will use data, facts and evidence supporting their analysis and recommendations, including visuals such as graphs, charts and maps to enhance the presentation of information in their project. The registration for this event is still open.

### Stress on headaches

In keeping with the goal of making positive change in the community, FOMRRA has partnered with Dr. Kamakshi Memorial Hospital to help the citizens of OMR stay stress-free and regain control over their health. There is good news for those battling those relentless headaches – just take advantage of the medical screening camps being organised at all OMR360 event venues to identify and address the root causes of your discomfort. If required one can opt for a more in-depth package that includes a consultation with a neurologist.

(Harsha Koda is co-founder, FOMRRA)



(Top) The judges at the music competition and winners in the group and solo singing contests; and (left) winners in the men's, mixed-doubles and women's categories of the carrom tournament.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



## The sidelight becomes the highlight



On July 28, it was carnival time at DLF Garden City, a gated community in Semmancheri.

Central to the event — organised by the Cultural Community of DLF GC One — was the celebration of exemplary performances of students of Class X and XII residing at DLF Garden City. The organisers had also inked in a GC Saree Run as a sidelight, but the event ended up being the highlight of the carnival. Women from the gated community, across age groups, had to be draped in the six yards while covering hundreds of yards, running around the gated community. Some were running, but a majority were sauntering, which the rule book permitted.

The six-yard drapes were twisted into various expressions of creativity — the most striking being how they were matched with track suits. The warm-up before the run was made up of dance moves; one participant took those dance moves well into the run, dancing all the way from the start to the finish line.

PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



## ‘Staging’ issues of contemporary relevance

The “Festival of Drama and Dialogue” was held at The School KFI in Thalambur over two days (July 30-31)

The event witnessed participation from various schools across the city. These included Good Earth School, Vidya Sagar, Abacus Montessori School, AMM Matriculation Higher Secondary School, KC High, Tatva School, Bala Vidya Mandir and Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School, says a press release.

The intention of the festival, envisioned by The School for over two decades now, is to create a non-competitive forum for students to participate and express their opinions around different issues that concern them through the medium of theatre, the release explains. The release further adds that an orientation programme was organised by the school for all the participants preceding the festival. It was



anchored by Mahesh Pande, a trained expert in carnatic music, theatre, and Indian classical dance. Some of the issues taken up this year were light pollution, drug abuse, war, children and familial relationships, and education. The dialogue sessions gave an opportunity for students and teachers to come together to engage seriously with these issues and raise questions around them.

## Celebrating students’ achievements and the six-yard drape

The Cultural Committee of DLF Garden City One hosted a two-kilometre Saree Run/ Walk/ Jog on July 28, 2024 to raise awareness about fitness for women.

“Running in a saree symbolises that fitness is not limited to a particular demographic but a priority for all,” said a press release from the Cultural Committee of DLF GC One.

Participations included women from the age group of 65-84 years as well. Awards were presented for Senior Citizens, Best Saree drape and Best stylist, the press release said.



The carnival on July 28 was essentially about felicitating the students who stood out in the 10th and 12th board exams for annual year 2023-24. Twenty-five students

from various schools residing at DLF Garden City were rewarded with gifts and the ones who topped overall or in any specific subject were called and rewarded accordingly, the release added. There was a “Kids Fun Cycle Race” too in two age categories (3-6 and 7-10 years), the press release said. The release remarked that the “DLF GC One — Cultural Committee” is a self-volunteered group of individuals who have zeal to celebrate traditional festivals. The committee consists of Savi Singh, Neaty Mehta, Bala Ramaswamy and Sarada Jayakumar, the release added.





# Lunching out at the library

The Directorate of Public Libraries has enjoined branch libraries to make students preparing for competitive exams feel at home; the library in Periyar Nagar has earned the admiration of the wider community for how it honoured that injunction

LIFFY THOMAS

Every afternoon, the children's section at Periyar Nagar Full Time Branch Library turns into a dining hall. Seated in small groups on the floor, students are served lunch.

The library's management and Vallalaar Trust have made this happen, benefiting students visiting the library to prepare for competitive exams.

Around 110 students avail the free lunch consisting of rice, sambar, rasam, appalam and poriyal. A serving of sweet is an add-on during special occasions.

Moved by the long hours students spend at the library preparing for competitive exams, C.A. Mohanaragam, grade II librarian, Periyar Nagar Full Time Branch Library, reached out to the Trust to sponsor lunch.

"Many of the students come from the outskirts or have temporarily relocated to the city to prepare for these examination. I have seen students sharing the little lunch they bring from home," says Mohanaragam, adding that at least 40 students live a hand-to-mouth existence.

The cutlery to serve lunch was bought by the librarian. "Transport cost is borne by the library. Every day, two two-wheelers are employed to ferry the meals from a kitchen in Thiru-Vi-Ka Nagar," he



Periyar Nagar library and (below) the new study hall at Anna Nagar library.  
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

vannamalai who recently cleared TNPSC Group II (A) exam, owes much of his success to the learning environment he got at Anna Nagar library.

(The Directorate of Public Libraries has reportedly instructed branch libraries to create a conducive learning environment for students preparing for competitive exams)

He says many like him cannot afford to go to a study hall and the library is where they spend much of their time, discussing the subjects with peers as well as tapping into the vast collection of books.

"At least 10 people who studied at the Anna Nagar branch library with me have cleared various competitive examinations," he says.

At the libraries in Anna Nagar and Periyar Nagar, coaching academies conduct a free mock test for students once a week.

Access to printer and paper, Wi-Fi and a discussion room are among other amenities offered by these libraries.

says.

The Branch Library in Dhandeeswaram has created an additional space outside the building to accommodate 20 to 30 students. Besides seating arrangement, a water dispenser is found in this space.

The Branch Library at Anna Nagar is one of the busiest in the city as the neighbourhood has many centres offering coaching for civil service examinations. In April, the centre got a new study hall.

The Directorate of Public Libraries is planning to construct an additional study hall on the terrace of the building to accommodate more students.

S. Mathuvanan, a native of Tiru-

**'Some branch libraries will stay open all days of the week'**

For many years, the timings of libraries functioning under the District Central Library were set in one and only mould – open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. with Friday as holiday.

There are now tweaks in the time schedule of some libraries, particularly the ones that are popular among the student community. The Directorate of Public Li-

braries is encouraging its branch libraries to remain open on Fridays, second Saturdays and also extend their timings.

Branch libraries in Anna Nagar, Periyar Nagar, Ashok Nagar and Dhandeeswaram register an impressive footfall of students preparing for competitive examination and extend their timings beyond 8 p.m. whenever there is a request for extended hours.

Kavitha M., district library officer, Directorate of Public Libraries, says a majority of students using public libraries are from outside Chennai and they stay in hostels. "We do not want a student to return disappointed or not study because the library near them is not open," says Kavitha.

She says there would be at least 10 libraries that have been instructed to open on second Saturdays and Fridays. Depending on the footfall and feedback of users,



A candidate who cleared the TNPSC exam with a senior library staff.

the Department has been working to make these spaces more user-friendly.

Under a pilot project, the terrace of the library at Anna Nagar will be getting a new discussion room, with WiFi connectivity, air-conditioning and other features.

"The Director has also instructed us to procure books that students specifically ask for," she says. As per data collected from the libraries, 25 students have cleared the TNPSC examinations and the department wants to increase this count so that these spaces benefit

more students.

## A new look

Currently, 34 libraries are being renovated for repairs under the Library Cess Collection funds. An additional four are being improved under the Tamil Nadu Assembly Fund.

"At the Shenoy Nagar library, much of the renovation work is complete. An additional space has been constructed to accommodate students," says Kavitha.

At libraries where patronage is poor, the primary focus is on ensuring basic amenities are provided. Goschen Library in Chintadripet is being taken over by the PWD's heritage wing for renovation work. "All these things have been possible because of the State Government's will to improve libraries. Towards this end, it allocated ₹ 20 crore in the budget for the district," she says.



## Remedial work needs some tweaks still



In its edition dated June 30, *The Hindu Downtown* shrieked in protest at a speed bump on a cement road running along Arasankazhani Eri. Its construction was of meretricious quality: it was alarmingly high and covered only three-fourths of the horizontal distance it had to.

The one-fourth unfinished business has now been completed, and the height of the older portion of the speed bump reduced.

However, the speed bump still reeks of crude construction, and lacks white markings.

This speed bump is found on a crucial link road connecting Semmanchery and Perumbakkam to Ottiyambakkam, Karanai and Sithalapakkam. The road is connected on one end to Netaji Nagar Main Road and on the other end to Karanai Main Road. The image was taken on July 30, 2024.

Photo: Prince Frederick

### Jewellery expo

JJ Jewellery Mart is organising an event called "Luxury Affair Wedding Expo" at Ilam Hospitality and Banquets, OMR.

According to a press release, the founder of JJ Jewellery Mart, Shri Nahar inaugurated the event in the presence of actress Anukreethy Vas; Jeo Michael Praveen, founder, Razzmatazz Group; Shama Parveen Ameen, founder, Zay Holidays; and Nisha, founder, Mudhra Luxury Salon.

A fashion show from Varahi Lakshmi



Skills was one of the highlights of the event. Designer Joy Crizildaa and choreographer Anusha Viswanathan were honoured on the occasion, adds the press release.

## Investiture ceremony held



The investiture ceremony of Rotary Club of Chennai Carnatic was held recently. According to a press release, the MD of the Park Elanza Group, Bhuvana Ramesh has taken over as the club president and Jayatha Easwaran as the secretary.

The governor of district 3234 N.S. Saravanan was the chief guest and the MD of the A2B Group, K.T. Srinivasa Raja, was the guest of honour.

### Dance festival ends today



Kathak Darpan Institute is organising the second edition of its dance event called "Smriti Festival" at Kalakshetra Rukmini Arangam. According to

a press release, the four-day event will end today.

The aim of the festival is to pay tribute to the legendary Kathak dancer, late Pandit Birju Maharaj. The event features classical dance performances by various artists.

Artist Padma Subramanyam was honoured on the occasion with an award called "Padma Vibhushan Pandit Birju Maharaj Smriti Award 2024."



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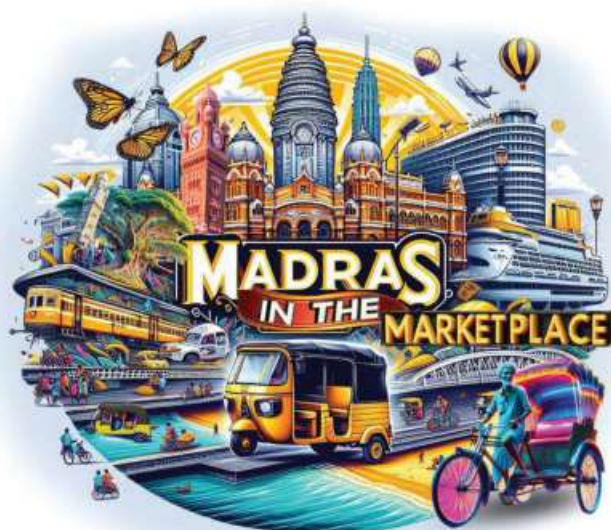
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Glimpses of the old police building at Royapettah, on August 2, 2024.  
PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



## Old police building to 'rejoin duty' soon?

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**I** imagine a whole building serving as a frontispiece of another building. And the frontispiece matches the building it "decorates" – or, at least, seeks to match it. And this humungous "frontispiece" is a piece of the past.

This is not a hypothetical situa-

tion. The E2 Royapettah police station has the older station, a heritage structure well over hundred years old, standing right in front of it. It adds a touch of other-worldliness to the new building.

The old structure is now empty, as the all-women's police station that functioned there has been shifted to another part of the city, another station.

And this heritage structure is go-

ing to undergo spring-cleaning. That piece of information comes from T. Vinoth Kumar, inspector, Royapettah police station.

According to him, the work would be completed before August 15 and the heritage structure showcased on that momentous day.

And the old police station is expected to start functioning again, becoming more than just a frontispiece dripping heritage.



## Weathering time elegantly

**T**here are two ways to preserve heritage. Treat it with kid gloves. Throw it into the rough and tumble of everyday existence. With a roof that is clearly a blood relative to the Jerkinhead gable roof, the

structure has witnessed many police personnel's retirement party but would not have its own. On the same premises, right behind this structure stands a police station built with current construction technolo-

gies. The new "colleague" takes much of the workload. But the old one has retained a plum role: the inspector's office is still located at the old building. All the rooms at this 1907-born building are at work, including the two

cells with redefined roles.

The two cells have been converted into regular offices, Inspector of the E6 Thiruporur Police Station, M. Saravanan points out. The bars have been retained but as window grilles.

The main door, and even one toilet door are made of sturdy stuff – they continue as iron doors. These images were taken on August 1, 2024.

Photos: Prince Frederick

