

T. NAGAR

Saidapet » West Mambalam » Vadapalani » Porur » Kattupakkam » Irungattukottai » Nungambakkam » Manapakkam » Ashok Nagar » Valasaravakkam

Gerugambakkam » Mangadu » Choolaimedu » Egmore » K K Nagar » Kodambakkam » Virugambakkam » Somangalam » Poonamallee » Chetpet



HOTTEST TOPIC OF THE SEASON

While everyone stresses about the soaring mercury, these three groups of researchers are studying heat stress in and around Chennai and how it impacts human health and the economy. They share the details of their work with The Hindu Downtown **P4**



A HOME PRODUCTION

What awaits gated communities that assume the responsibilities of facility management? There is the possibility of workers becoming trusted lieutenants **P5**

READERS WRITE

'Housing complexes let sewage into SWD'

Complaints to law-enforcing bodies including Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board evoke no response

P. SENTHIL KUMAR

The image, taken on June 6, 2025, shows sewage being discharged into a stormwater drain on Oil Mill Road in Iyyappanthangal. There are three multi-storey housing complexes in the vicinity. These complexes are behind this civic violation.

In August last year, I lodged a complaint with the Environmental Engineer of the Pollution Control Board, Sriperumbudur Environment District. Acting on my com-



plaint, the officials concerned inspected the three housing complexes and, in a reply received in December, stated that no waste or grey water was being discharged into the stormwater drain. The letter further mentioned that the waste water was be-

ing treated at sewage treatment plants within the housing complexes and reused for gardening purposes. However, the image clearly contradicts this claim.

It should be noted that my earlier complaints to Iyyappanthangal Village Panchayat received no response. Hence, I escalated the issue to Kancheepuram District Unit Office of the Directorate Of Public Health & Preventive Medicine; the Kundrathur Panchayat Union; and the Avadi Police Commissionerate. But they all closed the complaint just by forwarding it to Iyyappanthangal Village Panchayat. It is sad that none of these law-enforcing bodies exercised the powers and authority vested in them. Instead, they just passed the buck. Meanwhile, the sewage discharged into the stormwater continues to flow into the Cooum river at Vangagaram.

P. Senthil Kumar, coordinator, Confederation of Iyyappanthangal Residents Welfare Associations

Vehicular parking hinders access to ticket counter at Egmore railway station



Parking of vehicles has made accessing the ticket counter and reservation office at Egmore railway station difficult. This office is located at the station's entrance at Anna E.V.R. Maniammaiyaar Salai on Poonamalle High Road and near RPF Police Station.

Commuters, especially senior citizens and the differently-abled are put to a lot of inconvenience. Southern Railway needs to take appropriate measures to regulate parking of vehicles here, says a commuter.

This is a temporary ticket counter shifted to facilitate the ongoing redevelopment work at Egmore railway station.



'Periyar Street is battered again'

A patchwork was carried out at Periyar Street in Thirunagar, West Jhafferkhanpet sometime in February, because it was pockmarked with potholes. But water remained stagnant following the recent rains. This exposed the poor quality of the patchwork. Greater Chennai Corporation should provide a lasting solution on this road.

P. Sudhakar, secretary, Federation of Residential Welfare Associations, West Jhafferkhanpet

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The transformative power of Kalai Thiruvizha: a teacher's journey

A. AMUDHA

As educators, we often walk a tightrope – balancing academics with the complex realities of students' lives. I once believed that academic success alone could uplift students from challenging circumstances. But my perspective changed profoundly with Kalai Thiruvizha, a cultural festival introduced in Tamil Nadu's government schools.

Initially, I approached the festival with skepticism. Could artistic pursuits really contribute to a student's future in the same way as academic achievement? But as the festival unfolded, I began to see a transformation—not just in my students, but in myself.

Kalai Thiruvizha celebrates Tamil culture through dance, music and visual arts. At first, it appeared to be just another extracurricular activity, but it revealed something much deeper: the power of holistic development. I witnessed students – especially those considered problematic— redirecting their energy into meaningful expression. Girls once caught for mischief now practised “parai attam” during lunch breaks. Shy children found their voice in music; aggressive ones found purpose in dance.

One story that will always stay with me is that of a quiet girl from a single-parent household. Her mother worked as a daily wage labourer. Burdened by her circumstances, she often sat silent and withdrawn in class. During Kalai Thiruvizha practice sessions, I noticed her tapping her feet softly to a



During the 2024-25 edition of Kalai Thiruvizha. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

rhythm. There was a natural grace in her movements that caught my eye. With gentle encouragement, she joined the freestyle dance team. Initially hesitant, she gradually blossomed. Her eyes began to reflect confidence, her body language transformed.

These experiences taught me

that students are not mere vessels for academic instruction. They are individuals carrying unseen burdens. Art gave them a space to process their emotions, express their inner worlds, and find healing. More than just creative outlets, these performances became life-lines – building confidence, team-

work, and discipline.

As a teacher, this journey forced me to reassess my assumptions. I had been addressing only part of my students' needs by focusing exclusively on academics. Kalai Thiruvizha revealed that arts are not a distraction but an essential component of education. They foster emotional resilience, cultural connection and a sense of community.

The transformation was not limited to students. It changed me. I came to understand that teaching is not just about results and scores. It's about seeing the whole child—acknowledging their emotional, social, and creative dimensions. Arts

and education are not opposing forces. Instead, they are partners in shaping well-rounded individuals.

To my fellow educators: embracing the arts in education is not about compromising academic standards. It is about enriching our students' lives and offering them the tools to heal, connect and thrive. The transformation I witnessed was real, powerful and lasting.

In this balance of creativity and knowledge lies the true essence of education. Through festivals such as Kalai Thiruvizha, we are not just teaching – we are building resilient, confident, culturally rooted individuals ready to face the world.

(Amudha is a teacher at Government Model Presidency Girls Higher Secondary School on Gengu Reddy Road in Egmore)



Footpath in Vadapalani waits for a mending exercise

A damaged footpath on Duraisamy Road in Vadapalani. The footpath has been in this state of neglect for the past few weeks, say passers-by. The image was taken on June 7, 2025. PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B

Free computer classes at Bhavan's

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Gandhi Institute of Computer Education and Information Technology Centre at Mylapore offers free computer education to the educated unemployed youth belonging to the economically backward section of society. Courses such as MS Office, Tally and DTP have helped many students secure employment at various levels. Senior citizens can also enrol for Microsoft Word, Excel and Internet courses. The last date for collection and submission of filled-in application forms is June 25. The Institute is at East Mada Street, Mylapore. Contact: 24611312, 24643420

She has retired after 41 years of service at the company. At the farewell function, she spoke about how this office in Nungambakkam defined both her routine and life. Shiny is a resident of Choolaimedu

Shiny Wilson bids farewell to FCI

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOUR

K. KEERTHIVASAN

Shiny Wilson, flag bearer at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona and the first Indian woman athlete to reach the women's 800 m semifinals in Olympics, when she did so at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, retired from Food Corporation of India after four decades of service on May 31.

The four-time Olympian was serving as general manager at FCI located in Nungambakkam.

The farewell function was an emotional event for Shiny. It was attended by Ashutosh Agnihotri, chairman and managing director, FCI; and Jacintha Lazarus, executive director (south), FCI. Her husband, Wilson Cherian, an international swimmer, who retired from ICF after 43 years of service, was also present.

Known for her simplicity and reticent nature, Shiny was held in



high esteem at FCI, and her farewell function showed why she is a respected.

At her acceptance speech, Shiny recalled her childhood days and her experiences competing in Olympics. Shiny has taken part in three Asian Games, six Asian championships and seven SAF Games. She reminisced about her 41 years and three months of service at FCI. "I am thankful to have put in a long and satisfying service at FCI," she said, praising FCI's sports scholarship given to sport-

spersons and its consistency in recruiting sportspersons.

Shiny's love, passion and commitment to athletics is astonishing. A few months after giving birth to her first daughter in October 1990, she started to train in Bengaluru. "When my daughter was nine months old, I became a national champion in 800m and within a year, I won 400m gold and 800m silver at the Asian championships," said Shiny, a resident of Gill Nagar in Choolaimedu.

Shiny came to Chennai from

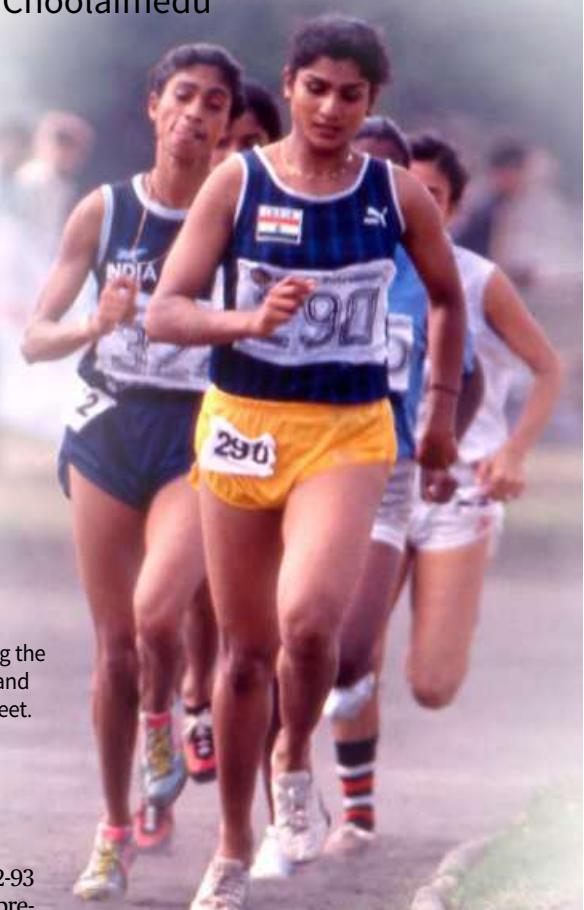
Shiny Wilson during the farewell function; and from an athletic meet.
PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Kerala in 1992-93 and went to represent Tamil Nadu in numerous national competitions.

After she joined FCI in 1984, she was one of those instrumental in fast-tracking the scholarships initiative of the organisation that has till today helped promising sportspersons get the much-needed stipend. Shiny continued to perform and shine in global and Asian events while being an employee of FCI; so much so that she even used to take

part in all athletics events organised by FCI when she was at the peak of her athletic abilities.

With her time at FCI coming to an end, Shiny will definitely enjoy her free time while putting her heart and soul into her many roles which include selector of the Indian team and a nominated member of the Asian Athletic Commission.



A go-to place for expertise on autism spectrum disorder

Besides engaging with parents of children with special needs, this exclusive centre in KK Nagar is working on a host of initiatives including creating a registry of those on the spectrum

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Excellence for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder, located on the premises of the Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine in K.K. Nagar, is aged six months, but it has taken strides belying its tender age.

Opened by the State Government to guide parents and guardians of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder as well as to



offer a range of services, the Centre is working towards becoming a "go-to-place" for ASD.

"We have had an average of 70 people attending these sessions, with webinars on occupational therapy garnering maximum attendance," says Rema Chandramohan, retired director, Institute Of Child Health, Madras Medical College, who oversees the

centre's functioning.

The high point of the 40-minute webinars are the question and answer sessions from parents.

"Everybody may not have access to a speech or occupational therapist but one can make use of the environment at home to offer therapy, for which we offer guidance. We also provide info about



At the centre.

"Those on the spectrum need to be constantly monitored and goals set for their development," she says that besides a helpline number they will soon be getting a toll-free number that one can reach out to for any nagging questions on ASD.

Future plans

The Centre for Excellence wants to be the "go-to" centre for ASD. It wants to start research work and also move to a bigger space. "We want to start giving accreditation to other therapy centres, which will be based on space, safety aspects followed and qualification of people working at the unit," says Dr. Rema.

A process to create a state-level registry for ASD is also being discussed, she says.

For details, call 9445535678.

Hottest topic of the season

While everyone stresses about the soaring mercury, these three groups of researchers are studying heat stress in and around Chennai and how it impacts human health and the economy. They share the details of their work with *The Hindu Downtown*

LIFFY THOMAS



A man quenches his thirst with water from a sprinkler at Marina Beach.
FILE PHOTO: R. RAGU

Collecting data

Professor Vignesh K.S. and his team of researchers from the Occupational Safety and Disaster Risk Management Department of SRM University are waiting for the sun to burn bright. The June 3, 2025 showers in the city forced them to postpone their plans to set up a camp at an industrial location in Thiruvottiyur where they will be collecting data about heat stress.

In April-May, the team completed the field study from Chengalpattu to Pallavaram. Industrial zones, in particular areas classified as "red" (in terms of contribution to global warming) by Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board have been the focus of the team this year. They have set up camp near an industrial area with all their devices including an exclusive heat stress monitor.

"Heat stress is calculated based on relative humidity, wet-bulb temperature and globe temperature. Through geospatial technology, we cover areas within a one to three kilometre radius of an industry to understand how the community is getting affected. From that buffer we will access and locate a few sample

places where heat exposure is high," says the assistant professor.

Once the field reports are completed, they work on presenting their studies and publishing them in leading science journals.

Vignesh says their reports played a crucial role in Tamil Nadu government formulating a Heat Action Plan (HAP).

"We are also in a capacity to give recommendations at a regional level on actions that need to be taken during heatwaves and other calamities," says the professor.

Their role does not end with bringing out a report rather they engage with communities. "We do training programmes with local communities that are vulnerable to heat. Many people do not know what is dehydration, heat stroke, especially those working on the highways. We sensitise them as per public health standards," he adds.

During the pandemic, the department studied air pollution levels in various neighbourhoods.

"As researchers, we generally focus on pre-disaster which is prevention, mitigation, preparedness and early warning."

Studying the vulnerable population

It is a hot and humid Friday in Chennai and beyond. A team of researchers from Chennai have headed to the Marakkanam salt pans in Villupuram district. Team members have fanned out to different sections of the salt pans.

One researcher is collecting urine sample of workers, another is collecting blood, a group is interviewing workers and another set of them is measuring heat with sophisticated instruments.

When the sun goes down they would return to their lab at Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research to document their findings. Once the field evidence is consolidated, analysed, peer-reviewed, the team would work on advocacy. This research is needed to better understand the impact of heat and heatwaves on human health, especially the vulnerable population, to develop effective mitigation strategies and improve public health interventions.

Vidhya Venugopal, professor of Climate Change, Occupational and Environmental Health at Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research, who is leading this team of researchers, says many lesser-known heat-related illnesses often go unrecognised.

As a global expert in heat and health, Vidhya has studied how high temperatures affect kidney, pregnant women and communities among others. While the direct effect of heat stroke is widely acknowledged, kidney ailments and cardiovascular diseases are not commonly associated with heat.

Having worked in the area for the last 16 years, she says they have rich data to show that heat stress poses significant health risks for vulnerable groups.

This summer, their outreach work extended to street vendors in the city. They like to focus more on women, especially as their working conditions are such that they avoid drinking water and this leads to dehydration and other issues, she says.

"We try to reach out to make sure vulnerable communities are not impacted so much by heat. If exposure is less the impact is less," says the Velachery resident.

Towards the end of this month, the team will be visiting a research practice centre of the institute located on the outskirts of the city to study and sensitise those coming to the outpatient department. After all, heat preparedness should be a 365-day effort.

Resettlement sites in sharp focus

Chennai resident Suchismita Goswami, who is currently pursuing her PhD in the University of Copenhagen in Denmark, is carrying out research on the new risks in resettlement sites in Chennai. This work brings her to the city.

Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board's resettlement site in Perumbakkam and the AIR resettlement colony in Thiruvottiyur are where her field works are concentrated. These resettlement facilities had been planned to provide safe and secure housing for communities; however today, floods and heat have impacted them socially and economically.

With heatwaves being a big concern for the State Government, Suchismita thinks there should be a special focus on resettlement sites.

"The findings are very particular to the resettlement sites and as a researcher you cannot universalise that," says Suchismita, who had a stint with the Madras School of Social Work as a faculty.

During fieldwork, she found it particularly challenging to initiate conversations with residents about heat-related stress.

Given Chennai's high temperatures, heat is often normalised and rarely discussed as a distinct concern

"Given Chennai's high temperatures, heat is often normalised and rarely discussed as a distinct concern. In the process, I came across several findings unique to resettlement sites," she says.

The resettlement sites severely lack green cover and also experience long hours of power outage in comparison to the rest of the city during summer months.

The resettlement sites are spread across vast tracts of land, and residents have to walk long distances due to the absence of last mile connectivity. They are typically inhabited by the most marginalised groups who cannot afford alternative housing options within the city.

The only formal heat-relief measure mentioned by the administration was distribution of electrolyte water at health centres. Residents however have found their own coping mechanisms such as extending the building, closing shops during the afternoon, installing sheds and curtains, and investing in multiple cooling devices.

The closing of shops or covering store fronts to block heat can reduce business visibility and income. These are new forms of risks which affect their health and finances directly, she adds.

A home production

What awaits gated communities that assume the responsibilities of facility management? There is the possibility of workers becoming trusted lieutenants

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

A facilities management agency is a cake ordered off the shelf. An in-house facilities management team is a cake baked at home. The latter obviously calls for a greater outlay of energy and time. But the icing on this cake is thicker, double-layered. Layer one: owners at a gated community that opts for this bold arrangement, actually begin to "own" the space, every jot of it. Layer two: the facilities management team they put together, hand-picking workers and assigning them to roles, can be won over in ways that a team sent in by an outside agency with a human resources rooster, cannot be. The workers are likely to be in for the long haul. And as time rolls on, the possibility of workers rising to the status of trusted lieutenants increases.

One finds this possibility illustrated with arresting images from the flood experience of The Central Park South (TCPS) in Sholinganallur in 2015. The workers pitched tent at the gated community. If it were dry harbour they were looking for, these workers could have found it elsewhere. They stayed at the community – occupying vacant flats – in the days after the floods to ease the challenges it faced. Remember, there were places on earth drier than TCPS: at this community, vehicles were marooned, some gulping rainwater all the way into their engines.

The fact that even now workers are offered places downstairs where they can stay and cook, and an AC room for a dash of comfort, proves offering shelter to them during floods was not a calculated, self-serving move.

"They are not servants. They are helpers," says Rakesh Ohri, president of the TCPS Owners' Association, his conviction crystallised by the memory of many difficulties surmounted, and achievements scaled, all because these workers went the extra yard. Rakesh notes that when the managing committee is running the show, dignity of the workers can be safeguarded more easily. Residents are instructed not to scold workers; complaints are handled by the managing committee to maintain respect. He is of the view that a



facilities management agency would not give this instruction to residents with the same emphasis.

A yard for a yard – that is how it works. Loyalty is earned and goodwill returned. Rakesh notes that one sign of a happy workplace and even loyalty is that on an average, a worker stays on the team for 10 to 11 years. If a worker hits a rough patch, the Association extends a financial lifeline – advances with a flexible repayment plan stretching up to a year. "Some repay earlier, some take the full period. And if they genuinely can't pay for one month, we grant an extension," explains Rakesh. Health insurance is another non-negotiable thread in this safety net. A group policy covers all workers. What is done for these workers in their darkest hour, returns as burnished loyalty.

"One of our plumbers lost his 25-year-old son recently to leukaemia" – when the youngster was battling the condition, the association had banded together to help the family with medical and other expenses.

Workers join residents in festivities, breaking bread and thereby, barriers. "We do Dandiya, and on May Day we arrange free food," says Rakesh. "During Diwali, we arrange short eats and programmes. They are en-

couraged to participate in that." In these shared moments, the line between "worker" and "resident" blurs into a sense of a joint family. Some communities grasp what a team formed and installed by them can do for them, but baulk at taking the exercise all the way to the finish line.

Sujatha Y, secretary of the owners' association at The Central Park East – a hop away from TCPS – says her community was the first in the area to have a home-grown team running the facility.

"We have seen the TCPS model – it is very structured and policy-driven," says Sujatha Y, secretary of the owners' association. Sujatha notes that "here at Central Park East, we are a bit more flexible" – some workers are hired directly; the community also goes to contractors to find



teams for certain functions.

Different strokes for different folks, indeed! East does have a group insurance option for workers it has appointed, but cares for the absolutely helpless through non-institutionalised aid.

"We have elderly gardeners with no bank accounts or family support," Sujatha says. "We make sure they are looked after." Financial help here is often personal and spontaneous, with residents stepping up to support the workers in paying their children's education fees or medical bills. Some community members contribute to programs supporting children's education, for example, treasurer's family trust aiding economically weak children with a minimum of 60% marks.

At Navin's Maris Dale in Semmancheri, Arokya Inian shares a unique way their community cultivates bonds.

"We have garden spaces with fruit-bearing trees, and the harvest is shared with our workers," he explains. This gesture isn't just about food – it is about sharing the fruits of collective effort, fostering dignity and connection. They have also embraced sustainability: recyclable waste is collected and sold, and the proceeds distributed among workers to

From Bollineni Hillside.

cover minor expenses such as tea and refreshments. It is a small but meaningful way to say, "We are in this together." At Bollineni Hillside in Arasankalani, the owners association has made arrangements for staff to live onsite in dorms. It is a win-win situation. The need for daily commuting has been struck off the list for the staff who avail this option. And for the residents, there is 24/7 availability of workers for urgent repairs. Staff receive group medical, life, and accident insurance. And the owners association has introduced a system of incentives to motivate the staff to do quality work.

Secretary K. Thirugnanam highlights another key aspect of this arrangement: easy knowledge transfer through mentorship. For example, experienced electricians train apprentices, creating a pipeline of talent that is clued into the unique power system within the community.

The challenges

In this scenario, committee members do not just step into the shoes of a facility management services provider, but wear an additional pair of shoes over the ones they are already wearing. A majority of them do this work in the midst of another work, one that puts bread on their table. In some seasons, the added responsibility can get overwhelming.

At Bollineni Hillside, Thirugnanam explains: "For example, in May, despite my responsibilities as a government advocate, I dedicated all my time outside of court to association work – covering recurring maintenance, new developments, public relations and government liaison."

He emphasised the workload intensifies during certain periods, such as the rainy season, which requires additional planning and precautionary measures. He adds the

in-house management committee is sizeable and "collective effort by (treasurer Senthilkumar, president Sajeekumar, 23 EC members and Thirugnanam himself as secretary) makes things easy" At TCPS, Rakesh notes that while many members have day jobs, two or three of them from the core committee are involved in daily operations. "I do not have a day job. Two or three of us do not. One is a housewife who also has other commitments such as singing. So, these responsibilities are managed as and when required."

Battery cart being operated around Mada streets



SRINATH M

Karur Vysya Bank has donated a battery-driven cart for use on the Mada streets around Kapaleeswarar temple in Mylapore.

HR&CE Minister Sekar Babu for-

mally launched the free ferry service in the presence of senior officers of the bank on May 31, 2025.

The cart can be used by senior citizens and the differently abled to access the temple entrance from the Mada streets.

When not in service around the

Kapaleeswarar temple, the cart stays at Sai Baba Temple hall. It is kept there at night. Space constraint at the Mada veedhi had led to this arrangement.

The service starts by 9.30 a.m. and is on till the temple closes at night.



PHOTOS: SRINATH M



Glimpses of the workshop

EcoKonnectors Trust, in collaboration with Munnetram Trust and FICCI FLO Chennai, recently conducted a sustainability workshop "Make Best Out of Waste" at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Mylapore.

Designed to empower women self-help groups and specially-abled individuals by equipping them with practical upcycling skills that can create viable business opportunities and to help environment enthusiasts integrate sustainable living into their daily routines, the workshop fea-

Reclaiming waste

tured a hands-on experience in sustainable crafting, led by trainer Malathi and her team from Munnetram Trust.

Participants learnt to transform temple flower waste into sambranis and handmade soaps; to create activated charcoal from coconut shells and its various applications, including charcoal pouches, soaps, and face masks.

Over 50 participants, including members from self-help

groups and non-profit organisations such as SNEH, V-Excel, Nalamdan Trust, Kalliamman Trust, Vidya Sagar School, Vriksha along with school students and sustainability supporters engaged in experiential learning.

The sambrani-making session was particularly interactive, where participants mixed their own blends and used a sambrani-making gun to craft fragrant

sambrani bullets. Similarly, the soap-making workshop provided participants with an opportunity to cut the soap base, observe the melting and mixing process, and mould the soaps themselves.

Not only did they gain practical insights, but they also took home a sample of their creations, reinforcing their newfound skills.

Throughout the event, the core team—Ashok, Bala, Ganga, and Sumithra from EcoKonnectors Trust—imparted knowledge

on sustainability, reinforcing the importance of upcycling as a practical and impactful solution.

To ensure continuity of learning, e-certificates and a PDF instruction manual were provided to all participants, allowing them to replicate and further spread the upcycling techniques learnt.

Here are some feedback who attended the workshop

Tejasvini Rao (CA student from Adyar), a participant, pointed out: "As someone who has recently gotten into sustainability, I left with a lot of insights on how I can implement it in my life. I loved the sambrani making tutorial the most."

Another participant Iswari Muthu noted: "The trainers were very clear in their explanation. The organisers had planned the workshop meticulously and we were kept engaged throughout."

Kathirvel of Kalliamman Charitable and Educational Trust, Thondiarpet, had a word of praise for organising live demos.

(**Ganga Sridhar** is a resident of Raja Street Mandaveli and co-founder EcoKonnectors Trust)



Students go through the exhibits; and during a field visit. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Listening to rocks

The Department of Geology at the University of Madras invites school and college students to take a look at the rocks and minerals parked in its museum

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Did you know the Department of Geology at the University of Madras welcomes school students to take a tour of the rocks at its museum? Various types of rock – metamorphic, igneous and sedimentary rocks among them – gathered from various parts of India are on display. One can also get up close with a dinosaur fossil and ammonites. The museum also houses samples of semi-precious stones

found naturally or mined.

"Discovering marine fossils is a special experience, many of them have been sourced from our field works at various sites in Tamil Nadu include the Ariyalur region," says Suresh Gandhi, Professor and Head of the Department of Geology, University of Madras.

During special occasions such as Micropaleontology Day and Environment Day, the Department sends out invitations to neighbouring schools to visit the museum and have a first-hand experience of the geological treasures.

"Besides this museum by the Department of Geology, we also have the Department of Applied Geology where one can learn about geological evolution. Students are welcome through the year, they just need to notify us in

advance," says the professor.

Careers in geology

In Chennai, the University of Madras and Anna University are the only two institutions that offer a postgraduate programme in Geology.

This year, the entrance examination for M. Sc Geology by the University of Madras will be held on July 14. Professor Suresh says the number of opportunities in the field of geology has grown over the years. "One can appear for the UPSC examination with geology as an elective, which is preferred by many as it is easy to grasp. Most of the oil fields recruit geologists and they are also needed for ground water studies," he says. For more details, call professor Suresh at 9443806534.



A thousand saplings to mark environment day

The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) planted over 1,000 saplings across various plantation sites (drinking water board lands in Kodungaiyur and Koyambedu, which will not be used for future construction by the board) as part of World Environment Day.

An in-house seminar on the impact of plastics on various ecosystems was also conducted to raise awareness.

CMRL continues to integrate sustainability into its operations through several green initiatives such as all metro stations achieving Indian Green Building Council Platinum certification, solar panels across stations and encouraging digital practices including e-ticketing to reduce paper consumption, said a release.

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Session on social media marketing

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, Department of MSME, is conducting a workshop on creating a YouTube channel and social media marketing from June 11 to 13. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For details, call 9543773337

Bio-enzyme soaps

The institution is also conducting another workshop on making bio-enzyme soaps on June 14. Time: From 9.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Those above 18 years of age with a minimum educational qualification of class 10 can apply. Hostel facility is available. For details, call 8668102600

Puja products

Another training programme on production of Puja products will be held from June 10 to 12. The products include: incense sticks, camphor cakes, rose water, omam water, oil, herbal candles, sandalwood tablets. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For details, call 9360221280.

Prior registration is required. All the workshops will be held at the institute's premises at SIDCO Industrial Estate, EDII Office Road, Guindy.

Workshop on entrepreneurial opportunities in solar energy sector



Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, Department of MSME, is conducting a training programme on installation of solar power from June 18 to 20 at the institute's premises at SIDCO Industrial Estate, EDII Office Road, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Prior registration is required.

According to a press release, the following concepts will be covered: introduction

to solar energy, entrepreneurial opportunities in solar energy sector; business models in this sector, relevant computer software, financial planning, regulations and subsidy schemes.

Those above 18 years of age and who have completed Class 10 can take part. The institute offers hostel facility for the participants on first come, first serve basis. For details, call 8668102600.

Job fair today in Thailavaram

Chengalpattu District Collectorate, District Employment & Career Guidance Centre, Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board are organising a job fair on June 8 in which companies from private sector will take part.

It will be held at the premises of Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board, Thailavaram Project Area, Thailavaram near Guduvanchery. Time: From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Candidates aged between 18 and 40 can attend, says a press release. They should bring relevant documents, identification proof, and passport-size photographs.

Candidates should register on the website: <https://www.tnprivatejobs.tn.gov.in>.

Tree saplings planted

In commemoration of World Environment Day, State Bank Staff Colony Saligramam Residents Welfare Association organised a tree planting drive at a park in their neighbourhood. The Ward 129 Councillor was the chief guest.



"Around 50 saplings of native species were planted," says the association's president, S. Shyamsundar.

The association also brought the issue of poor water supply from Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage

Board to the notice of the Councillor.

"Our colony has three streets. There is no supply in First Street for the past many years, especially for the houses in the east. And water supply is erratic in Second Street and Third Street. We learnt from CMWSSB officials that the water pipes are decades-old and hence dilapidated and need replacement. However, the problem remained unsolved."

We presented this issue to our Councillor. Following which CMWSSB officials carried out an inspection," says the R. Sridhar, the association's secretary.



Awareness programme on organ donation

Federation of Residential Welfare Associations, West Jhafferkhanpet, organised an awareness programme on organ donation recently. According to a press release, five residents from West Jhafferkhanpet aged between 55 and 75 took a pledge to donate their mortal remains.

"The importance of donation and the legal procedures were explained. A good number of residents took part in the programme," says the federation secretary, P. Sudhakar.

Culinary workshop on June 11



Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on ready-to-cook food items on June 11. According to a press release, the session focuses on millets-based sweets and savouries and tea-time meals such as *idli*, *adaip* and *puttu*. Another workshop on making soaps will be held on June 13. The session focuses on making soaps from herbs, leaves, flowers, and fruits.

Both the workshops will be held at the centre's premises at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy.

For details, call 044 - 29530048



Rally on ill-effects of tobacco consumption

In observance of World No Tobacco Day, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education & Research (SRIHER) took out a rally to spread awareness about the ill-effects of tobacco consumption. Students, faculties, and healthcare professionals participated.

According to a press release, the hospital has opened a cessation clinic as per WHO guidelines which help to overcome the addiction of tobacco usage through counselling and supportive medication.



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